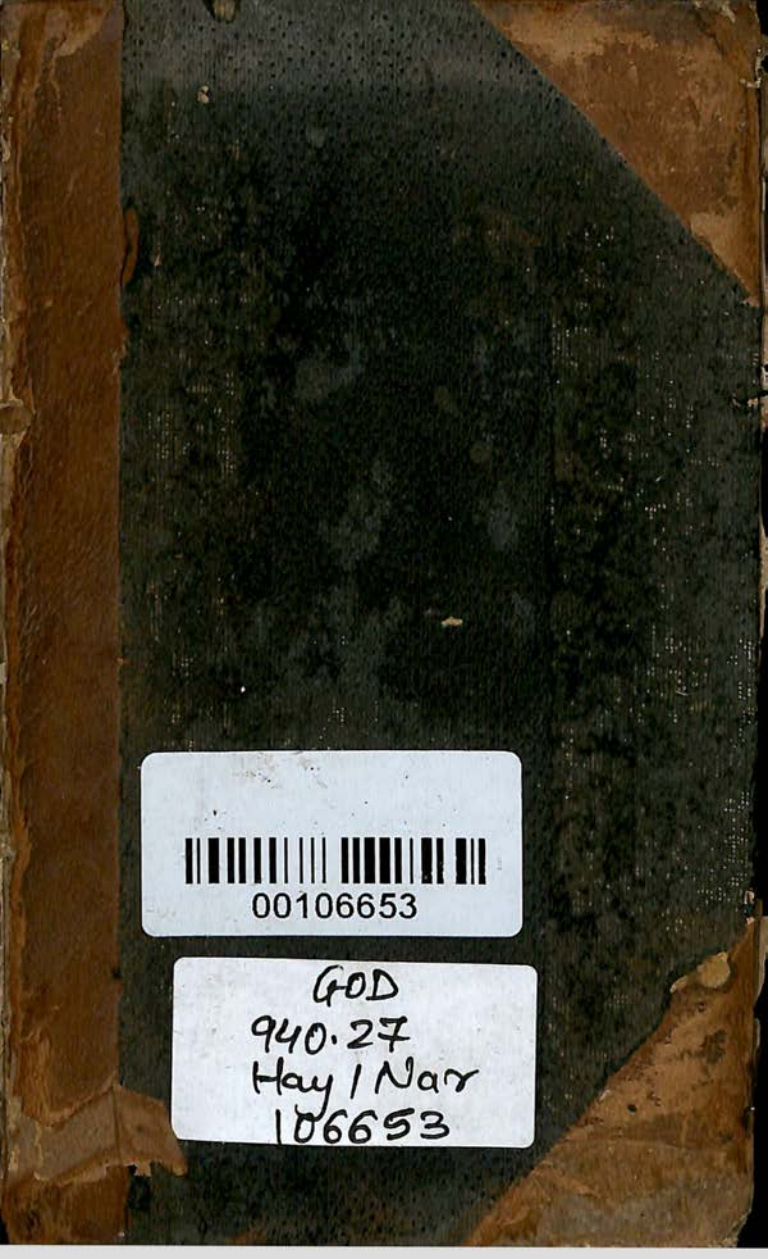
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A NARRATIVE

OF

THE PENINSULAR WAR.

BY

MAJOR LEITH HAY, F.R.S.E.

106653

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR JOHN OSWALD,

G. C. B.

AND THE SURVIVING OFFICERS

AND SOLDIERS OF THE FIFTH DIVISION OF

THE PENINSULAR ARMY,

THE

FOLLOWING PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary Observations—Arrival in Spain—Bishop of Santander—Conde de Villa Nueva—Santander—Departure from Santander—General Ballesteros—Return to Santander—Gihon—Oviedo—Army of Gallicia—Leon—British Officers—General Blake—Frias—Santander—Bilbao—Portugalete—Santurse—Valmaseda—Frias—Quincoçes—General Blake—Lastres de la Torre—Laredo—Santona—Santander—Marques de la Romana—Te Deum—State of Affairs—Military Errors—Marshal Ney—Spirit of the Spaniards—Tornosa—Duke of Dantzic—Aranda de Duero—Somasierra—Chamartin—Madrid—Lord William Bentinck—Mr Frere—Aranda de Duero—Defeat of the Spaniards—Napoleon—Burgos—Conde de Belvedere—Aranda—Cabeca Nabero—Tudela—Tordesillas—French Dragoons—Sir John Moore—Leon—Puerta de Pajares—Oviedo—Gihon—Infiesta—La Pola—Romana—Espinosa—Duke of Belluno—Arrival of British

Troops — Lord Paget — Astorga — Villafranca — British Army in Spain — Sir John Moore — Positions of the French Army — Mallorga — March of the British — Sahagun — British Army Retreats — Passage of the Esla — Napoleon — Marches to the North — Snow Storm in the Mountains — French Cavalry Cross the Esla — Are defeated — Spanish Troops — Important Dispatch — Sir John Moore — General Franceshi — General Colbert Killed — Scene at Lugo — Sir John Moore Assembles his Army — Position in Front of Lugo — Affair at Lugo — Enemy Repulsed — Continuation of the Retreat — Guitterjz — Betauros — Coruna — Explosion of Powder Magazine — Sir David Baird's Division — French Army — Arrival of the Fleet — Battle of Coruna — Embarkation — Interment of Sir John Moore — Injustice Done to his Memory — Unreasonable Expectations — Departure for England, . Page 1.

CHAPTER II.

Lisbon — Sir Arthur Wellesley — Abrantes — Zarza Mayor — Plascencia — Sierra de Gredos — Talavera de la Reyna — Duke of Belluno's Troops — Twenty-ninth Regiment — Spanish Army retires — French cross the Alberche — Battle of Talavera — Twenty-ninth Regiment — False Alarm — Duke of Belluno's Corps at Daybreak — Cannonade — General Ruffin repulsed by the 29th and 48th Regiments — British and Spanish Cavalry — Progress of the Battle — Charge of the British Guards — Battle restored by the 48th Regiment — Charge of General Anson's Brigade —

Colonel Elley—Noble Conduct of the 23d Dragoons—Culpable inactivity of General Venegas—Position of the Armies—General Cuesta abandons the Hospitals—Retreat of the British Army—Deleytosa—Estremadura—Jaraicijo—Truxillo—Pizarro—Santa Crux de la Sierra—Medellin—Merida—Route to Badajos—Spanish Frontier—Typhus Fever—Review of the Troops—Estremos—Lisbon—Defeat of the Spanish Armies, . Page 134

CHAPTER III.

Abrantes—Punhete—Tancos—Alburquerque—Don Carlos Espana—Villar del Rey—Marques de la Romana—Duque del Parque—French enter Caceres—Spaniards march to attack them—General Foy secures his Retreat—Junta of Caceres—Camp of Aliseda—Movement of the 2d Corps d'Armee—followed by Don Carlos Espana—Enemy in force at Merida—Apathy of Spanish Cavalry—Duke of Dalmatia crosses the Guadiana—Want of concert in the French Armies—Conduct of the Central Junta—Critical situation of Lord Wellington—His great Military Talents—Preparations for invading Portugal—Assembling of the French Army—Capture of Ciudad Rodrigo—General Leith—Thomar—Affair on the Coa—Fall of Almeida—Head-Quarters retire from Celerico—Lord Wellington and Marshal Massena—Advance of the French Army—Sierra de Busaco—Position of General Leith—Arrival of the French Army—Allied Army in Position—Battle of Busaco—Flank movement of the French army—March

of the Allies—Coimbra—Batalha—Approach of the French Army—Affair at Sobral—Seventy-first Regiment—Death of General St Croix—Position in front of the Lines—Enemy's Hospitals captured—Fifth Division—Lines in front of Lisbon—Position of the Cavalry—Monte Agraça—Retreat of the French—Conduct of Marshal Massena—his Difficulties—March of the Allies—Azambuja—Position of the French Army—Disposition of the Allies—Critical Situation of General Reynier—Operations of the Allies—Aveiro de Vaxo—State of the French Army—Reinforced by General Drouet—Cantonment of the Allies—Duke of Abrantes wounded—French besiege Badajos—Defeat of the Spaniards—Surrender of Badajos, Page 192.

CHAPTER IV.

Reduction of Ciudad Rodrigo—Death of General Crauford—Allies invest Badajos—Siege of Badajos—Fifth Division—Siege continued—Breaches stormed—Castle carried by Escalade—Fifth Division escalade—and carry the Town—General Walker wounded—Observations—Duke of Dalmatia retreats—Ingenious Bridge of Ropes at Alcantara—Sir Rowland Hill marches to Almaraz—and carries the Enemy's Forts—Guerillas—The Empecinado—Marques de Porlier—Don Julian Sanchez—Martinez—Guerillas, ... Page 285.

PREFACE.

In submitting the following pages to the public, some apology may be deemed necessary, after the numerous works that have already appeared on the subject, and the period having elapsed when the personal observations of an officer might be supposed to possess either novelty or extensive interest. Unrestrained by these considerations, the author has committed to press the substance of journals,—his constant companions during campaigns which he had the honour to serve under Sir John Moore and the Duke of Wellington; hoping that, in some respects, he may be enabled to rescue from oblivion scenes that have escaped the observa-

tion or notice of abler commentators. He has also been instigated by an anxious desire to record the deeds of officers who, respected during life, have passed from this world, and are now forgotten, except by personal friends, or those companions who, regretting their untimely fall, identify their memories with scenes never to be forgotten.

There is also in the weakness of his nature a vanity prompting this popular disclosure of occasions in which he participated, and to which feeling, time brings no diminution. The recollections of years passed in the active and exhilarating service in Spain must ever indelibly exist in his mind, as being, if not the happiest, certainly the most interesting period of his life.

Strongly impressed with these sentiments, constantly reading the works on the Peninsular War, with which the press has for years teemed, and wherein he imagined there existed some instances of misconception, and many of unintentionally erroneous information, he has turned to these volumes which he believes

to be sincere, and knows to be authentic; and after a lapse of years, determining to overcome indolence, has prepared them for publication.

If, in so doing, he has fortunately in any respect added claims to the already deservedly established reputation of the officers and soldiers of the Peninsular Army,—if the tribute of an eye-witness to many occasions of distinguished conduct on the part of those who sealed with their blood the pre-eminent glories of the British army, shall in the slightest degree tend, by recording their deeds, to illustrate their memories,—he must feel satisfied and happy in having made the attempt.

Owing to particular circumstances, opportunities were afforded him of witnessing the varieties of service during the struggle more generally than most other officers of a subordinate rank; and it happened that he had from its commencement resolved to preserve a regular diary of observations. Aware that in many instances the minor events detailed in the following narrative may be considered trivial, or

devoid of interest, it may also be supposed that he has too much indulged in personal records. To the first, he must plead in extenuation, an enthusiastic feeling inherent in his mind, which induces him to consider the slightest incident that occurred during the war worthy of being recorded; to the second, he has only to say, that the vanity and weakness of human nature must have drawn him into an error, which he has endeavoured, as far as the nature of a narrative would permit, to avoid.

The Peninsular contest has become a theme so frequently discussed, that familiarity with details, and an impression of its forming but one incident in the great drama of the French revolutionary wars, have, in our day, somewhat tended to withdraw attention from the military situation Great Britain there re-established among the nations of Europe.

To recapitulate what the French Imperial troops were, or even give a summary of their achievements, is unnecessary; it never can be forgotten by the present generation, either the awe inspired, or the fixed impression of dis-

trust with which we were committed to conflict on the continent of Europe against the victorious legions of Napoleon: nor will history withhold justice when recording the deeds of the Duke of Wellington and his army; an army that recovered the character of the nations of Europe, broke the spell, induced others to *believe they might be* successful, and established an imperishable reputation by overcoming and constantly vanquishing that brilliant force, whose eagles, surrounded by the halo of victory, had been conducted from triumph to triumph, by the greatest soldier that ever trod this earth. Such having been our opponents during the protracted and obstinately conducted warfare, it is not wonderful that feelings of strong excitement should result from the recollections connected with the successes of so glorious a field; and if the author of the following pages has vaunted the achievements of his companions, or has throughout maintained that on the field of battle British infantry are the best in Europe, he, in the first place, refers

unbelievers to the circumstance of their having been "les vainqueurs des vainqueurs de la terre;" and, secondly, if conviction has not then visited the disputants of the fact, let them appear on the plain, and the truth will be forced upon them in terrible reality.

NARRATIVE.

CHAPTER I.

It is universally known, that the measures adopted by the Emperor Napoleon, and the disclosure of his intention to subvert the Spanish monarchy, to terminate the reign of the Bourbons, and to place one of his own family on the Catholic throne, having produced a great sensation, and excited an unexpected resistance in the minds of the inhabitants of the Peninsula, deputations were sent, early in the year 1808, from Asturias and other provinces, to England, for the purpose of soliciting the assistance of its government in resisting the attempts of the most powerful and most extraordinary man of ancient or modern times, supported by the victorious armies of France, to place the crown of Spain upon the head of a foreigner, and to overthrow the ancient laws and institutions of that kingdom.

That the British government should at once form an alliance with the Spanish people, was the certain

consequence of the appeal made to it for support; and the nation hailed with enthusiasm the commencement of a struggle, which appeared calculated to produce the only substantial and serious obstacle that had yet been opposed to the conquering genius of Napoleon,—of the extraordinary destiny that, in a few years, raised its possessor from the subordinate ranks of the French army to the throne of an empire formed by himself, which embraced France, Italy, Holland, the Netherlands, and held in subjection the Rhenish confederacy and the Helvetic republic.

The revolt of the Spaniards gave at this moment a new aspect to the affairs of Europe. The nations appeared to derive fresh hopes, and to be aroused from the despondency which had resulted from multiplied and annihilating disasters. No sooner did the deputies appear in London than the government actively and promptly prepared to render that assistance to the cause which sound policy dictated, and the resources of the country enabled ministers to contribute without difficulty or delay, while the undisputed sovereignty of the ocean ensured a certain communication with all parts of the Peninsular coast.

A treaty of alliance being concluded between Great Britain and the Spanish people, ships were immedi-

ately dispatched, laden with arms, ammunition, and specie; and every means adopted to increase the confidence felt by the leaders of the insurrection. British officers were sent to the northern provinces for the purpose of ascertaining and reporting upon the actual state of the country, to assist in organizing its military resources, and suggest measures best calculated to enable a nation upon which the light of patriotic and noble feeling had just dawned, successfully to resist foreign subjection, although enforced by armies hitherto invincible, and conducted by the greatest man of the age. Among the British officers thus employed, Major-General Leith was ordered to proceed to Santander, having received instructions to report upon the state of the armament in the Asturias, in Biscay, Guipascoa, and Las Montañas de Santander. The author of the following pages left England as his aide-de-camp, and sailed from Portsmouth on the evening of the 17th August, 1808.

On the morning of the 22d, the Peruvian, brig of war, made the coast of Spain, and as the vessel approached the land, the mountains of Asturias appeared in the distance; the wild and varied country, wooded to its summits, exhibiting scenery of striking grandeur and interest. From the crew of a Spanish

fishing-boat information was obtained that we were considerably to the westward of Santander, our destined port. The brig was consequently directed to the east, and coasted along the bold and beautiful shore.

In the evening, a squadron of British frigates was perceived, and a fresh breeze soon brought the Peruvian within signal distance. Captain Atkins of the Seine, the senior officer, was then on shore, conferring with the bishop, who had taken a lead, and acted a conspicuous part in opposition to the French usurpation.

The Bishop of Santander, in appearance or in manner, but little realized the impression which the vaunted firmness and patriotism of the warlike ecclesiastic had produced in England; but when compared to the other specimens of Spanish military and civil authority, with whom we were soon destined to become acquainted, it is probably unjust to deny him a place somewhat removed from the insignificance that became apparent to the British officers who had left England impressed with an exalted idea of the Spanish character.

The bishop had shown considerable energy. His opinions were sincere and undoubted. Nominated regent of the province of Las Montañas, the decla-

ration he had published established his reputation as a zealous partisan and strenuous advocate of the cause of Spanish independence. Thus situated, he was considered by the British government as a proper person with whom to communicate. General Leith was instructed to attend to his suggestions as to the state of the country under his immediate control, and the organization and supply of the armies collecting in the northern provinces, or who had already taken the field, in resistance to the dominion of France. The Conde de Villa Neuva at this period was general-in-chief of the province; and perfect cordiality appeared to exist between the military and civil jurisdictions.

The Conde, an old officer, had formerly been in the Spanish Guards. He was a sensible, and, to a certain extent, a well-informed man, and without doubt, in times of internal peace and inactivity, had occupied a very respectable place in Spanish society. His appearance, however, did not exactly correspond with the highest notions of military costume, and as he was the first Spanish officer of rank we had seen, the impression was unfavourable.

Neither the bishop nor the Conde possessed any certain information as to the situation or movements of the enemy, nor were they positive that a Spanish

force of any description intervened between the quarters of the French army and Santander. This at first appeared an extraordinary circumstance; but when we subsequently became acquainted with the confidence and apathy of the Spanish character, it no longer excited surprise.

Santander is very favourably situated as a place of mercantile importance. Its spacious harbour is protected from the north-west by a promontory, at the eastern extremity of which is Cape Mayor. The Cathedral is not a building of great magnitude or magnificence; nor is the palace of the bishop, although large and commodious, remarkable either for its elegance or splendour. The town is, however, of considerable extent, and some of the buildings, particularly those upon the Quay, are spacious and handsome.

The principal line of communication from Santander to the interior of the country, is that of Reynosa, and from thence, by Burgos, to Madrid; and it being considered of importance to possess authentic information of the situation of affairs in that direction, I was ordered to proceed for the purpose of obtaining it.

Perfectly unacquainted with the language, and having been only three days in the country, this ap-

peared a service of some inconvenience and difficulty. My instructions were, to proceed by the pass of Escudo to Reynosa, where it was conjectured I should find General Ballesteros, (afterwards so distinguished during the Peninsular war,) in the command of a body of Asturians. I was to be accompanied by a Spanish captain of the name of Villardet, twelve soldiers of the regiment of Laredo, to which he belonged, and an old man who was to act as an interpreter.

The assembling of this *formidable* cavalcade occasioned a considerable sensation in the town of Santander, and, although late in the evening, a crowd collected to witness our departure. A large and handsome black horse bore the person of the Spanish captain, who was enveloped in his cloak, and whose lank and sallow visage was surmounted by a hat of no ordinary dimensions. A mule, caparisoned with all the usual cumbrance of Spanish saddlery, was prepared for me; and as, for the first time, a pair of horse pistols graced my saddle bow, and a cortège appeared ready to accompany me, I mounted with exultation, and derived no ordinary satisfaction from the feeling that I was the hero of this great expedition.

In the midst of these preparations for departure, an incident of a ludicrous description rather less-

ened the importance, and detracted from the gravity, of the occasion. When the old interpreter proceeded to mount the mule destined to transport him, the solemnity and silence of the scene was suddenly exchanged for the most discordant noise and the most clamorous disturbance. The master of languages, who apparently had neglected the study of equitation, unfortunately for him, had been provided with the only vicious mule in company, which, the moment he ascertained the burden that was intended for him, proceeded with his heels to disperse the crowd, to the terror and annoyance of some, and the amusement of others; nor did he desist from this violent exercise until he had prostrated his rider on the street. A struggle then ensued between the interpreter and his friends; the former strenuously objecting to any further attempt in subduing the refractory mule; the latter, having a becoming anxiety for his safety and comfort, as eagerly urging another essay, and prophesying, with considerable apparent likelihood, that upon a second attempt he would find himself most steadily and agreeably carried. The contest terminated in favour of the interpreter, who being mounted upon a more tractable animal, we proceeded upon our journey.

After travelling sixteen miles, we arrived at a

village, where the muleteers insisted upon refreshment both for themselves and their quadrupeds. The posado, or inn, at which we halted was, like most others in the north of Spain, of the worst description, the principal part of the house being appropriated to the accommodation of the horses and mules. At daybreak we were again in motion, and, travelling through a very romantic and beautiful country, the road conducted in narrow valleys, bounded by hills which were covered to their summits with trees of the most luxuriant foliage. Occasionally the valleys extended, and the country became less mountainous and more cultivated. In the course of the forenoon, we perceived smoke ascending from a wood in our front; and upon arriving at it, found an advanced post of three hundred Asturians, all peasants, who had recently enrolled themselves, and who were but indifferently armed. From the commandant I learned that General Ballesteros was at Reynosa; and having travelled as expeditiously as the nature of my escort would permit, reached his quarters in the evening.

The appearance and manner of General Ballesteros was very superior to that of any military man I had yet seen in Spain; young, active, and intelligent,

he at once impressed a stranger with the idea that he was an efficient, and likely to become a distinguished, officer. His promotion had been very rapid, the revolution having occasioned his removal at once from the subaltern ranks of the Spanish army to that of Major-General. He had been for some time at Reynosa, in command of a body of Asturians, amounting to between four and five thousand men, who had not yet been incorporated with either of the Spanish armies. The General communicated to me the information he possessed relating to the position of the enemy's troops, and the movements that had recently taken place in his cantonments. The head-quarters continued to occupy Vittoria; and nothing had occurred which indicated any immediate intention on the part of the French army to resume offensive operations. No force of any description had approached Reynosa; and his situation there appeared to be, for the present, secure and undisturbed.

Having ascertained that Santander was in no immediate danger of a visit from the enemy, I prepared to retrace my steps, and, having procured post horses, galloped at midnight through the streets of Reynosa, preceded by the postilion. The stillness of a beautiful night was interrupted only by

the challenge of the Spanish sentinels as we passed their several posts, and enlivened by the sound of bells attached to the bridle of my companion's horse, the wild song in which he occasionally indulged, the distant noise, the mirth of travelling muleteers, and the rush of waters falling over their rocky channels in the ravines and closely-wooded valleys through which the road is conducted. The only pace the Spanish post horse ever attempts is either a walk or a gallop; and as the postilion invariably precedes the traveller, and checks his horse into the former at his option, and without any previous indication of his intention, the transition from the rapid to the slow pace is attended with a species of shock not agreeable to the person unprepared for this mode of proceeding. Notwithstanding this and other annoyances, riding post in Spain is, upon the great routes, where the horses are good, a pleasant and tolerably expeditious mode of performing a journey. At six in the morning we reached Torre la Vega, and at nine arrived at Santander.

It being evident that no event of importance was soon likely to occur in the province of Las Montañas, the General resolved to re-embark and proceed to Gihon and Oviedo, for the purpose of ascertain-

ing the state of efficiency of the armament in the Asturias.

On the morning of the 29th, the Peruvian anchored in the Bay of Gihon, one of the most exposed on the north coast of Spain: unprotected, by the formation of the land, in any direction, the whole swell of the Bay of Biscay rolls in with uninterrupted force, and renders it, particularly in northerly winds, a roadstead of great danger. The weather had been moderate for some time, and at the anchorage we found the Iris frigate and Albicore sloop of war.

Gihon had been for a considerable time the station of a British Consul, and at this period Mr Hunter held that office. He had long resided in Spain in similar situations, and his knowledge of the country, and of the manners and customs of its inhabitants, eminently qualified him for the service. On landing, we learnt that the arrival of General Leith had been intimated, and quarters had been prepared for him in a large old mansion near the town.

There is nothing very remarkable in the appearance of Gihon. It is a tolerably extensive seaport town, but in every respect inferior to Santander; nor is the scenery in its immediate neighbourhood

so bold and picturesque as that on the other parts of the Asturian coast.

The chateau we were destined to inhabit was an ancient fabric of great extent, the property of a nobleman, and bearing every appearance of neglect and rapid decay. We entered it through a large and massive gateway, leading into a spacious court, surrounded by stone pillars, the capitals of which, considerably worn and defaced, were entwined with grapes and wild shrubs of various kinds; while at their base weeds grew in undisturbed luxuriance. In the centre of the grass-grown court was a spacious draw-well, bearing every appearance of long disuse. A handsome staircase conducted us to numerous apartments, perfectly habitable, but alike conspicuous for their great extent and dearth of furniture. Such was the first residence of a private gentleman, and at the same time a person of rank, that we had seen in Spain.

The day after our arrival at Gihon, General Miranda and a deputation from the Junta of Asturias came for the purpose of escorting the General to Oviedo, and on the following morning we proceeded to that city. Oviedo, the ancient Ovetum, and the capital of Asturias, is situated in a romantic and beautiful valley, surrounded by rich and variegated

scenery. On approaching it from the north, the view is grand and extremely picturesque: the lofty spire of the cathedral forms a conspicuous object; and the background of distant mountain gives a variety and importance to the scene.

Our reception at Oviedo was of the most friendly description. Nothing could exceed the cordiality with which all classes appeared to witness the arrival of British officers. All former feelings of irritation, even those universally produced by the taking of the frigates previous to a declaration of war, and the more recent but more just misfortune brought upon the country by the destruction of its fleet at Trafalgar, seemed buried in oblivion. England, and she alone, had become the theme of their enthusiastic admiration; and instead of regarding us as the inhabitants of a nation with whom they had recently been carrying on war, they seemed to feel they had only restored the relations between the countries that had been for a period obstructed, but which they considered ought naturally ever to exist.

The members of the Provincial Junta were assembled to receive the General; and many of them, including the General-in-chief Açevedo, the Marques de Campo Segrado, the Conde Toreno, General Ponté, and the Visconde de Campo Grande, accom-

panied him to the Casa de Regencia. General Açevedo, an elderly man, apparently not very energetic, and extremely short-sighted, had been appointed to the command of the Asturian contingent. He was on the eve of departure for Llanes, a town upon the coast, where the new levies were to be assembled, and where he expected to be placed in command of 10,000 men.

At this period of the war, the French army was cantoned on the Ebro. General Blake, with the army of Gallicia, was at Leon, and it was supposed he would immediately advance. He was to be reinforced by General Açevedo's corps and that of the Marques de la Romana, daily expected to arrive on the north coast of Spain, after having effected its escape from the control of the French Emperor.

General Blake's force was numerically considerable, but deficient in equipment; the infantry undisciplined and ill armed, and many of the regiments composed entirely of recruits, ill officered, and inefficient. He had a very small body of cavalry, and the artillery alone seemed to be in a serviceable state. This does not appear to be the description of force with which a General-in-chief would be anxious to take the field against such troops as composed that of the enemy. But General Blake appeared

to have no feeling of this kind: he went headlong to the line of operations, and the result was, as might have been expected, most disastrous.

I must here notice some of the officers employed by the British government on missions to the Spanish armies. This is more imperiously necessary, in consequence of the superficial, and, in many respects, undeserved remarks published upon the subject in Lieutenant-Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War.

That author, in enumerating the officers sent to Spain, has omitted to mention persons who had other claims to confidence than those derived from "their acquaintance with the Spanish language;" nor is he correct in stating that "there was no concert among them, for there was no controlling power vested in any, but each did that which seemed good to him." *

Of these I have to mention the names of Major Lefebure of the royal engineers, afterwards killed at Matagorda; of Colonel Jones, whose services, experience, and judgment, are so well known to the army, and whose authority upon the events of the Peninsular war is at least equal to that of the

* Vol. i. p. 11.

gallant author himself; of Colonel Paisley, and of Colonel Birch, all of whom were under the orders of General Leith; and it may be fearlessly asserted that, in point of zeal, intelligence, military knowledge, or sound judgment, four more distinguished persons could not have been selected from any army.

To employ officers for the purpose of obtaining information, was certainly a very natural primary measure on the part of government; nor is it probable that authentic intelligence could have been so well obtained by any other mode. These officers, however much the author above mentioned has been misinformed, were active and zealous, constantly moving from one point to another, and visiting the different Spanish armies as circumstances of interest occurred in the prosecution of the war, or had reference to the general plan of operations which *ought* to have been adopted.

To have selected persons qualified to give unerring advice or accurate information upon the various details of continental warfare, would have been difficult in the state of practical knowledge then possessed by the British army. Not to have viewed the Spanish insurrection with some degree of enthusiastic partiality, must have bespoken a want of those feelings upon which the success of the war

in a great measure depended; and it would have said little for the rational calculation of individuals who had seen, for a length of time, the Spanish monarchy a prey to misrule and to decay, had they expected to find, without regeneration or improvement, the military establishments alone effective, and armies ready to take the field, worthy of what the nation had once been. It was evident that this was impossible; and I can safely aver that no such opinion of the Spanish armies was ever entertained by many of those officers whose military foresight and civil sagacity is brought forward and commented upon by the gallant author. To read his account of the missions to the several provinces, it would appear that a more useless, inefficient, weak, meddling set of persons were never employed to mar a great cause. There may have been an excess of zeal, there may have been some of these officers less useful or less intelligent than others; but to include the whole, with the exception of Lord William Bentinck and Major Cox, in one sweeping and unqualified censure, appears as little worthy of history as it probably will hereafter be considered of notice.

Having ascertained the state of forwardness of the preparations made by the Junta of Asturias to arm and equip the troops destined to reinforce Ge-

neral Blake, General Leith, accompanied by Captains Lefebure, Jones, and Paisley, of the royal engineers, left Oviedo, and proceeded to Gihon, from whence he travelled along the shores of the Bay of Biscay to Llanes, the head-quarters of General Açevedo, and from thence, by San Vicente de la Barquera and Santillaña, to Santander, where he received intelligence of the occupation of Bilbao by a division of the Gallician army. This event occurred on the 20th, when the Marques de Portago, with the 4th division, dislodged General Monthion, who retired to Durango without attempting any serious defence.

At this period General Blake's head-quarters were at Frias. His army occupied an extended, and, from the nature of the country, a very unconnected position. The advance of his left must have been with the intention of moving his whole army in that direction; but, executed as it was, the march of one division upon Bilbao, previous to a simultaneous alteration in the position of the others, and consequently placing the troops so advanced in an isolated state, without support, and in close contact with the enemy, was one of great danger and miscalculation. Nothing could have been easier than accomplishing the destruction of the 4th division; and it is difficult to assign a satisfactory reason

for the cautious and feeble attack subsequently made by the Duke of Elchingen, he being in command of a force adequate to the successful encounter of the whole Gallician army, instead of a single division.

When the occupation of Bilbao became known at Santander, Captain Atkins, with the Seine and Cossack frigates, sailed to the eastward, and appeared off the bar, expecting that the Biscayan peasantry would rise and join the patriotic cause; but the tenure upon which the Spanish troops held possession of the town was not of such a description as to inspire confidence; nor did the general commanding hold out a prospect of being enabled to maintain his post, and by so doing protect the inhabitants from the consequences attending the return of the French army, the re-appearance of which would, of course, be attended with more serious exaction if the population appeared in open hostility.

In consequence of some arrangements with the Bishop, General Leith was prevented from immediately going to Bilbao: he therefore ordered me to proceed to that town, and in an hour after our arrival at Santander I was on my route. Having travelled all night, passed through Santoña, Castro Urdiales, Laredo, and Portugalete, I crossed the

ferry at the Convent of San Nicolas, a league from Bilbao, which is from thence approached by an excellent road, leading along the banks of the river through a rich and beautiful valley.

Bilbao is a very fine town, built with great regularity, the streets spacious, well paved, and the buildings large and handsome. The environs are highly cultivated and picturesque; the town lies low, but is surrounded by great variety of ground, the neighbouring hills being wooded to their summits. There is a cheerful and active appearance about its inhabitants, and it has every advantage from its beautiful, and, commercially speaking, convenient locality. The river is navigable up to the town, which has long been the most considerable mercantile place upon the north coast of the Peninsula.

The occupation of Bilbao had occasioned a considerable sensation at the French head-quarters, and an important movement was the result. Marshal Ney with his whole corps d'armée broke up from Logroña, and having rapidly marched the distance, appeared in front of Bilbao upon the 26th.

Previous to the arrival of this force, no attempt had been made by General Monthion to recover possession of the town, nor had he in any manner disturbed the quarters of the Spanish division; but the

position of the armies rendered it beyond doubt that the enemy would without delay check the progress of troops already so far in advance of his right flank, and the approaching attack was consequently expected.

On the morning of the 26th, Captains Lefebure and Jones reconnoitred the roads in the direction of the enemy's troops, and returned with information of his advance. The consternation of the inhabitants increased hourly, and the town exhibited a scene of great bustle, activity, and distress, many persons preparing to depart; anxiety and terror depicted in the countenances of some, while a sullen and determined demeanour bespoke the resolution of others to remain with their families, and submit to the exactions they had every prospect of being subjected to, more especially as the Spaniard appeared invariably to suppose that any indication of dislike to their re-appearance, or any zealous demonstration of regard for his own military countrymen or their allies, was certain of being known and appreciated by the French.

About noon it was reported that the enemy was within a league of the place. Even the Spanish staff was roused into activity, and the same men, who less than a week previously had driven a brigade of the enemy from the town, and then sunk

into a state of apathy and forgetfulness, inexcusable even in a station removed a hundred miles from the seat of hostilities, began to recover their energies; and, in justice to them, it must be admitted that the arrangements made for resisting a proportional force were, if not judicious, certainly timely.

About one o'clock, the inhabitants were thrown into the greatest consternation by unfounded rumours that the enemy's cavalry had entered the town. Nothing could more strongly prove the feeling excited by the terror of that event than the scene which immediately ensued. A more perfect panic could not well be imagined. The street was instantaneously crowded by the people, who rushed past uttering the wildest screams. They were accompanied by horses, mules, cars loaded with furniture, and by cattle and sheep; and without pausing to investigate the truth or incorrectness of the report, were flying to gain the road to Portugalete.

General Leith, accompanied by the officers of his staff, proceeded to join the Marques de Portago, who was upon an eminence to the right of the Durango road, where had been placed two pieces of cannon. Upon rising ground to the left of the road was posted a column of infantry, and three pieces of artillery. A battalion of grenadiers occupied a

height still further to the right, and another defended the bridge at the entrance of the town.

Having made this disposition of his force, the Marques awaited the approach of the enemy now in sight, and whose tirailleurs were observed descending into a valley at the distance of about two miles from the Spanish position. Three columns of infantry, with a considerable body of cavalry, advanced by the Durango road. It was evident that the enemy approached with caution; no attempt was made to press the Spanish division; but officers were sent forward to reconnoitre—a service they performed with great boldness.

The Spanish artillery tried the range of their guns against the nearest column of the enemy's troops, but without any effect. Soon after, the French cavalry manœuvred to the left. The exposed state of that flank, and the superior force already displayed, now made it prudent to think of retreat. The general officers present agreed upon the propriety of that movement, and the cannon having been placed in front of the column, the whole retired by the road of Valmaseda, unmolested by the enemy, and arrived at that place without sustaining any loss—a very inexplicable circumstance, and one of peculiarly good fortune; for, had a rapid attack been made, the

defeat and dispersion of the fourth division would have been the inevitable result.

A considerable quantity of powder having been landed at Portugalete for the use of the Biscayan leviés, I was ordered to proceed to that place, and endeavour to get it removed, and then cross the country to Valmaseda.

The weather, which had been fine during the earlier part of the day, had changed. Rain fell in torrents, adding to the misery of the different persons who, escaping from Bilbao, covered the whole extent of the road to Portugalete. On it were to be seen the Spanish merchant and his family toiling through the deep mud,—the unattached Spanish officer, who had displayed his uniform during the absence of the enemy, but no longer appeared to consider its being worn by him as a reason for comfortable reflection,—the English amateur, who had visited Bilbao full of curiosity and warlike enthusiasm, but who, unprepared for the reverse of the picture, was now to be seen struggling onwards to a place of safety, drenched with rain, lightly clad, indifferently shod, and perfectly miserable.

At Portugalete, I was informed that the powder above mentioned was at Santurse, a league distant from the former; and without delay, proceeded to

that village, where I found the launches that contained it aground, and no possible means of transport by which its removal could be effected. It became an object of considerable importance to prevent so large a quantity as 400 barrels falling into the hands of the enemy. There being every prospect of his immediately sending detachments to intercept the ammunition and supplies, in progress from the British shipping to the Gallician army, promptitude of arrangement became more necessary. To leave the powder in charge of the Spanish guard appeared to ensure its being captured. When considering what was most advisable in this emergency, I observed in the crowd a Spaniard of the name of Felix Blanco, an officer who had accompanied the general to Bilbao, and whose manly appearance, and fierce sombrero, gave hopes that he would have led into contact with the French, but whom, I regret to state, I had passed among the fugitives. Whether it was to be attributed to his superior powers of pedestrianism, or to his early departure, I cannot decide; certain it is, he was very near the head of the column.

Although this hero, who displayed on his hat a very splendid ribbon, on which was inscribed "Vencir o morir por Fernando VII.," was not exactly the

person to be selected for the defence of a post; still, taking into consideration the dislike he appeared to entertain to the sight of any thing in the shape of an enemy, I considered him a person who would certainly use every exertion to expedite departure previous to his arrival; and as the launches afforded him the means of escape, as well as a plausible motive for again appearing in his native town, without having carried into effect the martial intentions with which he had left it, I felt convinced that he would strain every nerve to execute this important service.

After instructing Don Felix to proceed to sea as soon as the state of the tide made it practicable, I left Santurse, and, at three o'clock in the morning, passed to the right of the French corps which had bivouac'd in advance of Bilbao. I entered the village of Valmaseda, and again joined the Marquis de Portago's division, the soldiers of which were apparently as unconcerned as if no enemy was near. They were straggling about the streets, which were crowded, and blazing in all directions with the fires that had been kindled. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, groups of military and peasants were to be seen, the former recounting the events, and the latter listening to the adventures, of the preceding day.

It continued to rain without intermission, and nothing could be more comfortless and wretched than the situation of the troops; still there was an uncomplaining appearance, that bespoke them well calculated to endure hardship and privation. No murmur of dissatisfaction escaped from the soldier, either at the exposed state of his quarters, or the inclemency of the weather. He appeared to be cheerful and resigned, and, smoking his cigar, seemed in the midst of a scene which custom or nature had rendered familiar.

General Leith, accompanied by Captains Jones and Doyle, had proceeded to Frias, where he expected to find General Blake. I remained at Valmaseda on the 27th, and very early the following morning, was on the road to Urantia. The rain, which had been incessant during the former day and night, continued to fall, and increased the difficulties of a bad mountain road.

The road from Urantia towards Frias leaves the village of Angulo to the left, near to which place it ascends to the plateau of Old Castille by a precipitous and singularly conducted track, called the Peña de Angulo. The rocky heights rise perpendicularly from the plain, and the only route by which they can be ascended is in most places cut from the solid rock.

The causeway winding up its face, and approaching the summit, is extremely steep, and the turns in it sharp and narrow. A more dangerous road cannot well be conceived, no obstruction being in any part opposed to the consequences of a slight deviation from the beaten track.

Nothing can exceed the picturesque beauty of the scenery at this point. The country is wooded in the most luxuriant manner; and from the rocky heights, mountain torrents fall in all directions: but having reached the summit of the pass, the aspect of the country is immediately altered; the varied and luxuriant valleys of Biscay are exchanged for the bleak plains of Castille.

At a league and a half in advance is the village of Quincoces, which had become the head-quarters of the Gallician army. General Leith, having taken another route, had gone on to Frias; and I was the first person General Blake had seen who had been present with his fourth division upon the 26th. He appeared to have no certain information as to the occurrences upon his left, and exhibited an unpardonable degree of ignorance in a general-in-chief, more particularly as there was nothing to obstruct his communication with the division, and as an import-

ant movement had taken place two days previous, at a distance of not above forty miles.

Rumours of a very exaggerated nature had reached him concerning the retreat of the Marquis de Portago from Bilbao; but no effort appeared to have been made to ascertain their foundation; no official report of any description had been received, and a division of his army might have been annihilated, forty-eight hours previously, without his having the slightest notion of the fact. Little as I knew of military arrangements, and the conduct of armies, this was to me an inexplicable circumstance, and augured ill for the future success or well-directed combination of the army of the left.

General Blake, the descendant of an Irish family, had, previous to the Revolution, been a colonel of infantry in the Spanish army, from which rank he at once rose to the command in chief, and although under the orders of General Cuesta at the battle of Rio Seco, he was at the head of a separate army, and upon the removal of that general, held the supreme command in the north of Spain. He appeared at this period to be about fifty years of age, soldierlike in his person and address, with a manner that indicated firmness and resolution.

The first regiment I met at Quincoces was one of

Gallician grenadiers, a very fine body of men, better clothed and appointed than any of the Spanish troops I had previously seen. Two of the officers of this corps invited me to partake of their quarters, which I most readily acceded to; for crowded as the village was, there appeared a slight prospect of getting cover of any description, and the rain continued as incessant as ever.

The following morning presented no improvement in the state of the weather. The wind blew loud and cold as it swept across the dreary plain upon which Quincoces is situated, which, from its altitude and want of shelter, appeared to combine every requisite for being one of the coldest inhabited spots in Spain. In the evening, General Leith arrived, and took up his quarters in the wretched village of Lastres de la Torre, where also was the second in command of the army, General Cabiga.

It had been asserted, that in his intercourse with the British officers who previously visited him, General Blake displayed a reserve and dislike, and that he appeared to have no cordiality of feeling towards our countrymen; but whether it was that he considered General Leith possessed of additional means for supplying him with money and with arms, or whether the former impression had been ill-founded,

I cannot determine; certain it is, he exhibited no appearance of jealousy at the presence of the General: He was very communicative; all their interviews passed without any difference occurring; and they parted with every appearance of cordiality.

On the morning of the 1st of October, Captains Birch and Carrol left Lastres, on their route to General Cuesta's army, and General Leith set out for Santander.

After leaving Lastres de la Torre, the road takes nearly a northerly direction, and descends gradually the whole way to Villasanta, a small village surrounded by wood. In it we found a hospitable friar of the convent of Oña, in whose house the General took up his quarters for the night. It formed a contrast to those we had lately inhabited, being arranged in the most perfect manner, according to Spanish ideas of comfort. Instead of unglazed windows, the friar, with a proper estimate of the cold situation in which his habitation was placed, had his house well supplied with glass, and double latticed, his rooms matted, and his braseros plentifully supplied with charcoal.

The following day, having passed through Laredo, crowded with fugitives from Bilbao, whose apprehensions had carried them thus far from the ene-

my, we crossed the ferry at Santona, and arrived at Santander, where every thing appeared in the same quiescent state as formerly. The return of the General had been precipitated by the receipt of information, that the troops of the Marques de Romana would be landed at Santander. The circumstances attending the escape of this force from the Island of Rugen are so well known that it is unnecessary to recapitulate them here.

On the morning of the 8th, the Defiance, seventy-four guns, convoying a fleet of transports, with part of the division from the North, appeared in sight. The delight of the inhabitants, when made acquainted with this circumstance, was unbounded. They rushed in crowds to the quay, and expressed the greatest anxiety for the approach of the shipping.

As it was probable that Captain Hotham would immediately leave the coast, after seeing his convoy safe into harbour, I was ordered to proceed on board the Defiance, and communicate with that officer; but after getting over the bar, the boat encountered so heavy a sea, and it blew so hard, that the Spanish crew declined proceeding, and without regret I assented to their returning, more especially as the ship was at such a distance as to render my getting near her at all a very improbable circumstance.

Towards evening the wind moderated, the transports entered the harbour, and soon after the Conde de San Roman, Brigadier-General Caro, with some of the superior officers, landed, and communicated with General Leith.

The Marques de la Romana had gone to London, and his division was under the temporary command of Brigadier-General the Conde de San Roman, colonel of the regiment of Princessa. It consisted of four very strong regiments of infantry, a detachment of artillery, two regiments of dragoons, and two of hussars.

The regiments of Princessa and Zamora formed a portion of the regular infantry of the Spanish army, previous to the revolution. They were clothed in white, and extremely well appointed, with the exception of their arms, which were old, and inefficient. The two other infantry regiments bore the names of Balbastro and Valencia, and were equipped as light troops. The heavy cavalry of the division comprised the regiments Del Rey and Infante, and the hussar regiments were those of Villaviciosa and Almanza, clothed in green, and very brilliant in appearance. Unfortunately, when escaping, these regiments had from necessity abandoned their horses. This rendered them consequently inefficient, and

incapable of taking a part in the operations of the Gallician army, with which they were destined to act, and to which, from its deficiency in cavalry, they would otherwise have been a most useful reinforcement.

The journey of the Marques de la Romana to London, at this juncture, was an unfortunate circumstance; for had he accompanied his division to Santander, and at once assumed the command of the army of the left, previous to any very important movement taking place, by superseding General Blake, he might have averted the fatal consequences, and counteracted the errors which that General subsequently committed. Whether the Marques would have commanded with more science, or greater judgment, cannot now be determined; but he possessed one advantage of no slight importance in the struggle then going forward. It consisted in having the confidence not only of the troops, but of the people. Long accustomed to consider his name with respect, the Spanish population never doubted either his capacity, or the sincerity of his intentions in opposing the French domination; and his recent conduct in bringing back some of the best regiments of the army to assist in fighting the battles of their country, confirmed the previously entertained favourable opinion. On the

other hand, General Blake had recently risen to command, was untried as a general, and did not possess the confidence of a majority of his countrymen in the north of Spain. Thus circumstanced, and being aware how much the war was one of prejudice and popular opinion, he might consider himself compelled to advance, and fight, when his army was not in a state to warrant the assumption of an offensive attitude; whereas, under similar circumstances, Romana might with impunity have taken the responsibility either of inactivity, or of retreat.

Upon the 12th a Te Deum was performed by the Bishop of Santander, in commemoration of the arrival of the troops; at which ceremony were present, the British officers then at Santander, the Conde de Villa Nueva, and most of the officers of the Marques de la Romana's division. The cathedral was crowded, and the scene grand and impressive.

The situation of affairs in the Peninsula at this moment, appeared to the vain, confiding, and credulous Spaniard prosperous in the extreme; and it was ludicrous to hear the only speculation advanced by some, and those otherwise intelligent people,—namely, whether the French army would be permitted to escape? Perfect and uninterrupted success appeared to them certain; and infallibility was con-

sidered the attendant of their unorganized, and ill-appointed armies. To a dispassionate observer, there was every prospect of a very different result, and every indication of the probability of those disasters, which are in a great degree to be attributed to the unfounded confidence above noticed, added to the circumstance of the Spanish armies' manœuvring in direct opposition to every sound principle of military tactic.

The French army, although reduced in numbers, was composed of veteran soldiers, perfectly equipped, long accustomed to service, complete in every arm, and commanded by experienced and distinguished officers. Concentrated in a plentiful country, having its communications with France open and uninterrupted, it was cantoned so as to ensure the assembling of a large force upon any point where its assailants appeared to press. From 45 to 50,000 men were under arms, exclusive of the garrisons; and by intercepted intelligence, it became known, that reinforcements to the amount of 66,000 infantry, and 8000 cavalry, would join its ranks on or before the 10th of November. These troops, part of the grand army from Germany, had traversed France with great rapidity; and the Emperor Napoleon himself was on the route for Spain.

If ever practicable to have struck a decisive blow against the French army previous to its being reinforced, the movement of Marshal Ney from Logroña to Bilbao, afforded the opportunity. Had the different Spanish armies then simultaneously moved, and attacked the enemy, weakened by the absence of the corps forming his centre, a serious impression might have been made. General Blake, by a rapid movement to his right, could without difficulty have co-operated in a joint attack; the third and fourth divisions of the Gallician army either following his line of march, or remaining in observation of the Duke of Elchingen's corps at Bilbao.

But nothing so well timed or rational was attempted by the Spanish generals. Their armies moved slowly, and only with activity when the enemy was in such force as to render all their efforts perfectly unavailing. To the other errors committed by the Spaniards in the conduct of the war, is to be added the loss of valuable time; nor is the government of Great Britain to be exempted from merited censure in that particular.

Following up the retreat of Joseph Bonaparte from Madrid, and taking advantage of the fortunate result of Castaños's campaign in Andalusia, before the impression thereby created had ceased to be

important, and before Napoleon had it in his power to strengthen his armies in the Peninsula, was the clear and rational policy of the Spanish government and its powerful ally. Instead of adopting such immediate and vigorous measures, it permitted the armies to remain inactive, not improving in discipline, and little in equipment, until the enemy was sufficiently strengthened to render all attack abortive. Then, indeed, the Spanish authorities showed a decided inclination to precipitate their troops into contact with prepared and powerful adversaries; and the consequences became as disastrous as the result was certain. As to the British government, if an army was to be sent into Spain as an auxiliary force, and essentially to benefit the cause, it ought to have been concentrated, and advanced to the line of operations, by the 1st of October.

General Blake had moved his head-quarters from Quincoçes to Valmaseda, and from thence, upon the 12th, advanced to occupy Bilbao with three divisions of his army. Marshal Ney had previously returned to the Ebro, leaving General Merlin, with 3000 men, in that town; but, upon the advance of the Spanish divisions, being greatly outnumbered, he evacuated it, and retired to Zornosa. The Marques de la Romana's division continued inactive at Santander, not-

withstanding its having been supplied with British arms, and perfectly equipped for the field.

On the morning of the 14th October the troops were drawn up on the Plaza de San Francisco. It was the first time that the division had assembled under arms since landing, and its appearance was soldierlike and effective. Being the birthday of Ferdinand the VIIth, the air resounded with expressions of loyalty; and the enthusiastic cheering of the great crowd assembled, left no doubt as to the sincerity of feeling in the cause. Historians may endeavour to misrepresent the real feeling of the inhabitants of the Peninsula, and may accuse those officers who possessed other means of judging than could be obtained by marching through the country with their regiments, of being blinded by flattery and attention; but the pertinacity with which the Spanish people combated misfortune, and the unconquerable resolution with which they endured misrule,—the patient sufferance with which they bore years of constant distress, and supported circumstances of unceasing exaction, will prove to future times that there was truth in their professions, and sincerity in the cordiality of their hatred to the French.

General Blake remained inactive at Bilbao from the

12th to the 24th of October, upon which day he advanced for the purpose of attacking the enemy at Zornosa. His previous movements had been directed to the left; and it was evidently his intention to advance still farther on that flank, and thereby turn the right of the French army. In prosecution of this object, the division from the north would have been a most important reinforcement; and it might have been either transported to Bilbao, or marched to that place previous to the movement against Zornosa; but instead of that plan being adopted, upon the very day the Gallician army advanced towards Durango, Romana's division was marching upon Reynosa, completely in rear of the line of operations, and farther removed from a junction with the main body of the army than it had been at Santander.

It was three o'clock on the evening of the 24th before General Blake attacked the enemy at Zornosa, and then very feebly. The French supported a fire of light troops in front of the town until dark, and the Spaniards, although greatly superior in force, made no impression. During the night, General Merlin placed his troops in position on the road to Durango, and the following day was passed in skirmishing, without any serious affair taking place.

During these operations, the army from Germany

had reached the Spanish frontier, and reinforcements to a great extent had joined the ranks of the enemy. If the advance of General Blake under former circumstances was rash and dangerous, it now amounted to absolute madness. It was rushing to inevitable destruction; and, broken, disheartened, and dispersed as his army soon became, it is a reflection upon the tactic and the energy of the enemy that any portion of it was suffered to escape. He could not be in ignorance that columns of the grand army covered the route from Bayonne to Vittoria, and that, instead of manœuvring to surround a weakened and dispirited force, he had to encounter the best troops on the continent of Europe, soon to be conducted by the master spirit of the age. Even after the advance to Zornosa he might have changed his line of operations with safety and effect. Instead of following General Merlin, had he retired upon the evening of the 25th to Bilbao, and from thence, by Valmaseda, to the Ebro, he might have assembled his army, and either formed a junction with other portions of the Spanish force, or continued on the defensive until circumstances changed, or events decided that some chance of success should attend his operations.

In direct opposition to any line of conduct either

so prudent or judicious as this would have been, General Blake continued to persevere in the movement he had commenced; and, as if aware of his own weakness and inability to make an impression even against one division of the French army, he continued inactive from the 25th to the 31st,—thereby giving Marshal the Duke of Dantzic time to assemble a force at Durango of above 20,000 men, with which, on the morning of the latter day, he attacked the Spaniards, overthrew them without the slightest difficulty, and drove them back upon Bilbao. The Spaniard continued his retreat, and arrived at Nava, upon the river Salcedon. Marshal Lefebure terminated the pursuit at Guenes; and having left a division of his corps at that place, he retired with the main body to Bilbao. Napoleon had not yet assumed the personal command in Spain; a circumstance that accounts for the delay which occurred in completing the destruction of General Blake's army. The Marques de la Romana not having arrived at Santander, and it being possible he might have landed at Coruña, and proceeded direct to the capital, I was ordered to Madrid, and at nine o'clock on the evening of the 29th October was on the road to Reynosa with dispatches for that General, for Mr Frere, and for Lord William Bentinck. After having passed

through Reynosa, Burgos, and Lerma, I arrived at Aranda de Duero. The route from Reynosa to Aranda is uninteresting in point of scenery; the country, in many places, flat, bare, and but indifferently cultivated. The olive, which is a dull, unpicturesque tree, is almost the only one that interrupts the sameness and monotony of the plains of Old Castille.

The Duero runs close to the town of Aranda, and is there crossed by a very handsome bridge, upon the great road to Madrid, which continues through a plain to the post station of Onrubia, from thence to Fresnillo de la Fuente and Castillejo.

In the evening I approached the Somasierra, and entered the pass over the celebrated barrier of the Castilles. It was midnight before I ascended the mountain, which was covered with snow to a considerable depth, that had recently fallen. The wind blew loud, and the cold was extreme. The road winds through ravines for a considerable distance, and, gradually ascending, it is neither very steep nor ill conducted.

The village of Somasierra is situated high in the mountain. The houses, when I passed, were covered with snow to a degree almost rendering them imperceptible. Where the village is situated, the hill descends precipitously to the west of the road, and

upon this slope, probably for purposes of shelter, the houses are built. Snowed up as the whole scene at this time was, the low and insignificant town, with its flat roof, appeared, from the height above, to be but a part of the mountain side. After having crossed the Sierra, the route to Madrid passes through a country little varied in scenery, and neither picturesque nor luxuriantly cultivated. The villages, as the road approaches the capital, improve in appearance and extent; but no alteration in the aspect of the country, either in improved cultivation or ornamental scenery, indicates the neighbourhood of a great city.

At the distance of a league from Madrid, to the left of the road, is Chamartin, the residence of the Duque del Infantado. It is situated in a wood very limited in extent; nor are the grounds about it either varied or beautiful. The house resembles, in size and appearance, an English gentleman's residence of the second or third class, and is consequently not on such a scale of grandeur as it might be supposed would have satisfied the luxury and magnificence of the great family of Infantado.

Madrid is so situated as not to be seen at a great distance when approached from the Alcobendas road, in consequence of the plain which extends from that

village having a gradual ascent; and it is only upon gaining the summit, at the distance of about half a league, that the domes and spires of the capital become visible. No villas, rows of trees, fountains, public walks, or well-frequented footpaths, extend in this direction. The plain is sterile and uncultivated; nor is it until close under the walls of the city that the slightest attempt at ornamental shade has ever been attempted. Then indeed the scene is changed; and after passing the Amphitheatre for the bull fights, on the right, and the Prado on the left, the traveller arrives at the splendid Puerta de Alcala, and enters the spacious and elegant street of that name.

Madrid differs from most other towns of equal magnitude. It has no suburb; and the moment the wall is passed, the palaces of the court appear in all directions. As a commercial city, it never could be of importance. The inland situation, and absence of any navigable river, rendered that impossible. The inhabitants consequently, in its days of prosperity, consisted of the court, of its followers, and of artizans and tradesmen to supply them with the necessaries and the luxuries of life.

From a census of the population taken by order of Carlos IV. in 1797, it contained at that period 167,607 inhabitants, being an increase of 20,064 souls

Drawn by Major Leith Hay

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in the course of ten years; the census of 1787 making the number within its walls only 147,543. Estimating the increase at the same ratio for the subsequent ten years, it would, in 1807, have contained nearly 188,000 people. Since then the population has decreased; consequently, the modern capital of Spain never contained 200,000 inhabitants. The town is about a mile and three quarters in length, and a mile and half broad; its greatest extent being from the Puerta de los Embaxadores to the northernmost gate, and its narrowest part from the Puerta de Alcala to the Palacio Nuevo. Madrid is encircled by a wall, and domineered by a height, upon which the Retiro is placed, and which is only separated from the town by the southern part of the Prado, or great public walk.

The Prado, shaded by trees, planted in rows, and of great beauty and magnitude, is also embellished by fountains. It is a noble public walk, to which, in the evening, a great portion of the population resort, sometimes crowding it to excess. At other periods of the day, it has rather a deserted appearance; but it is at all times a great ornament to the city.

Of all the gates of Madrid, the "Puerta de Alcala," built during the reign of Carlos III., is the finest. It is a noble entrance to a town, and forms one of

the most distinguished ornaments of the Spanish capital. The Puerta de San Vicente, close to the Manzanares, is the entrance nearest to the Palacio Nuevo. It is also a handsome gateway, and was erected in the same reign.

The Alcazar, or Royal Palace, is supposed to have been originally founded by Alphonso VI., the fifty-ninth Catholic king of Spain, and to have been destroyed by an earthquake. Henry II. rebuilt it; and the fourth king of that name enlarged and adorned it.

The Emperor Charles V., the greatest name in Spanish history, who was partial to Madrid, from having experienced the salutary effects produced by its climate, the quality of the water, and purity of the air, determined, in the year 1537, to remodel and enlarge the palace,—a work which was in a progressive state when he resigned the crown to his son, Philip II., giving him, at the same time, strict injunctions to have it completed. Philip III. and Philip IV. contributed to its improvement. The most eminent architects were employed; and in adorning the interior, the most celebrated painters and artizans of the age found scope for their varied talent. In the reign of Carlos II., the palace continued to receive farther embellishment; but this

perfected work, the result of the united exertions of so many ages and so many kings, of so much ingenuity, and such endless expense, became the victim of accident, and was consumed by fire in the year 1734.

Philip V. resolved to restore the palace on a scale of magnificence beyond that of any similar class of building in Europe. He consequently ordered a model to be submitted to his approbation by an architect of the name of Juvarra, who had rendered himself celebrated in Italy, particularly at Turin, by the splendour of the edifices there erected in conformity to his designs. Under Juvarra's auspices a model was framed, and approved of, which is still in existence. It was constructed to combine every quality of extent and decoration calculated to satisfy the intentions of the king, and at the same time suited to the situation upon which the palace was to be erected, it being the determination of Philip to place the Palacio Nuevo exactly upon the site of the Alcazar.

While the preliminary arrangements were yet incomplete, the architect died, and his pupil, Saqueti, was employed to carry the great work he had projected into effect. After considerably altering Juvarra's plan, and rendering it, as he considered, better calculated for the situation, Philip gave his final

approval to the design; and upon the 7th April, 1737, the work commenced.

The four fronts of the Palacio Nuevo extend each 470 feet, and the height of the building, from the base to the cornice, is 100 feet. It is built of white Colmenar stone, which, preserving its purity of colour, give to the building a light and brilliant appearance. The columns and pilasters are of the Doric and Ionic orders. The height of the palace is at all points the same, nor is any portion of the roof perceptible. The cornice is surmounted by a balustrade, with pedestals at intervals. Upon these were once placed statues of the kings of Spain, from Ataulfo to Ferdinand VI.; but having been removed, urns were substituted, and the royal arms, carved in stone, decorate the eastern entrance. In the interior of the great court were statues of the Emperors Trajan, Adrian, Theodosius, and Honorius; but it appears that some enemy to statuary had once held predominant influence at the Spanish court, for these have also been removed, and pillars of marble occupy their sites.

There are six principal entrances to the edifice, five of which are on the south and one on the eastern front. The inner court is 140 feet square, with an open portico that surrounds it, and forms the sup-

port of a gallery, from whence communicate the apartments of the royal family and the rooms of state. The interior decorations of the palace are superb; and it contains a very fine collection of pictures by the most eminent masters of the Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and Flemish schools.

The fresco painting throughout the palace is very finely executed; and some of the ceilings by Mengs are considered as the chefs-d œuvre of that master. Of these, the apotheosis of Hercules and of Trajan are very splendidly designed. Of the numerous and valuable pictures, the portraits by Velasquez form a conspicuous and brilliant portion.

The Conde Duque d'Olivarez, by that master, is one of his most spirited and grandest pictures. He has there given life and action to a very heavy class of horse, and seated the favourite minister upon his back with peculiar firmness and grace. Philip III., Philip IV., and their queens, also by the chief of the Madrid school of Spanish painters, are fine pictures, as indeed are all those from the hand of Velasquez, who, for elegance of design, taste in his compositions, brilliancy in colouring, and all the higher requisites of the art, has seldom been equalled, and never surpassed. Titian and Vandyke can alone be compared to him as portrait painters; and his his-

torical pictures are even more celebrated. Mengs considered his great picture of General Pescara receiving the keys of a Flemish fortress, as the chef-d'œuvre of Velasquez.

The picture by Titian of the Emperor Charles V. is worthy of particular notice. It is a noble portrait. That of Philip II., and his infant son, is a grand composition. In it the king is represented as holding up his son to fame, personated by an allegorical figure descending, in the act of presenting a palm branch and a crown. In a scroll, are the words "majora tibi;" and the signature of the painter is "Titianus vicelius equis Cæsaris fecit."

The martyrdom of San Lorenzo, by Luco Giordano —Susanna and the Elders, by Paul Veronese—the martyrdom of St Bartholomew, by Spagnoletto—the descent from the Cross, by Mengs—Ulysses discovering himself to Achilles at the court of Licomedes —Judith with the head of Holofernes, by Tintoretto—and two children, by Guido Rheni, are all fine specimens of the masters. The collection is also rich in the works of Vandyke, Tiepolo, Rafaelle, Bernino, Correggio, Brughel, Wouvermans, Murillo, Leonardo da Vinci, Nicolas Poussin, Marati, Albert Durer, Andrea Sachi, Teniers, Annibal Caracci, and Andrea del Sarto.

The model, by Don Philip Juvarra, is preserved in the Royal Armoury, an extensive building, situated at the eastern side of the place on which the Palacio Nuevo stands. Had the design been carried into full effect, the palace would have been unequalled in grandeur and extent.

The Manzanares is a very inconsiderable stream, but its banks are beautifully wooded. It was the frequent pastime of the dull court of Carlos IV. to pass in the evening through the gate of San Vicente, from whence the line of carriages, preceded by those of the royal family, drove at a slow pace along the shaded road upon the river side towards the bridge of Toledo, and afterwards returned to the palace by the route they had previously taken.

The Prado is situated at the lower end of the Calle Alcala. At its southern extremity is the Puerta de Atocha, and at the other the palace of Bueno Vista, built by the Duchess of Alba, and by her sold to the Prince of Peace. The Calle Alcala is much the finest street in Madrid, varying in width, and having a considerable ascent. The western extremity is not visible from the Alcala gate; but it extends to the Puerta del Sol, where the Calle Mayor commences, and, running nearly in a direct line, intersects the town diagonally at its narrowest point.

The residences of the nobility are, in general, very splendid, and well calculated to contain the great number of retainers and domestics that, previous to the revolution, appertained to the establishments of many of the grandees. It is stated that the Duque de Medina Celi formerly had upwards of eight hundred persons either belonging to his household, or supported exclusively by his munificence. Representative of the first family in Spain, he was also the richest of all the grandees, having a revenue of fifteen millions of reals.

The houses of the Prince of Peace, of the Duques de Osuna, Infantado, Hijar, Lerida, and Frias, of the Marquesses de Sant Jago, Villafranca, and Santa Crux, of the Condés Altamira, Rivella Gigeda, and Fernan Nuñez, are the most remarkable private edifices in Madrid.

The Casa del Campo, situated upon the opposite bank of the Manzanares, is not, either from the size of the building, its interior decoration, or the beauty of the park in which it is placed, worthy of notice. It was, however, a favourite residence of Carlos IV., who, like other members of the Bourbon family, was an enthusiastic sportsman. The bronze equestrian statue of Philip III., by Bologna, in the gardens of this hunting seat, is much and justly admired. The

only other statues of any celebrity at Madrid, are those of Philip IV. and of the Emperor Charles V., in the gardens of the Retiro.

The Royal Academy of San Fernando, or Cabinet of Natural History, is situated on the highest part of the Calle Alcala, and was originally intended to comprise schools for painting, sculpture, and architecture, with a repository for specimens of the natural history of the world. The building is not imposing in its appearance. It possesses very little external ornament; and although one of the most modern, it is the least conspicuous, of any public edifice in Madrid. The interior is well adapted for the purposes intended. The lower story contains the schools. The gallery, with casts from the ancient statues, is spacious and handsome: it is completely filled with them, arranged in perfect order, and so numerous as to produce a grand effect.

In the picture gallery is the celebrated Titian Venus, considered one of the finest works of that master. The Ascension, by Rafaelle, the Virgin, the Judgment of Paris, the Susanna and the Elders, by Rubens, are amongst the genuine pictures of this collection. There are also many copies after the great masters.

The cabinet of natural history contains a very ex-

tensive collection of fossils, ores, anatomical figures, animals, birds, and fishes, apparently well arranged, and in perfect preservation: in it is also a great variety of Jewish, Grecian, Moorish, and Roman vases; in addition to which are specimens of all the richest and rarest jewels, set in different forms, and studded, as ornaments, on the most beautifully-wrought vases and goblets. This collection is, upon particular days, thrown open to the inspection of the whole population; and when I visited it, the rooms were crowded with Spanish soldiery, and persons in the lower ranks of society.

The Opera House, called Los Caños del Peral, is small, and not calculated for any great display of spectacle, but well adapted for music. Previous to the revolution it was a fashionable place of resort, and possessed the attraction of the most celebrated singers in Europe.

The Spanish theatres Del Principe and De la Crux are named from the streets in which they are situated: both are spacious, and well adapted for representation. The Principe is the most modern, and is, in some respects, superior to the other. These are the only theatres of Madrid, and they are apparently sufficient to accommodate the portion of the public having a taste for histrionic display.

Popular pieces, alluding to the various scenes which had occurred since the commencement of the war, were exhibited; but even these failed to produce crowded houses, although nothing could be more enthusiastic than the expressions of delight with which the auditory beheld the Siege of Valencia pourtrayed, or the applause that accompanied the appearance of a most outrageous representation of the union between Great Britain and Spain, depicted by a flaringly-coloured transparency, in which figured his Majesty George the Third and the amiable Fernando Septimo, locked in a close embrace!

In pursuance of the object with which I had visited Madrid, after having ascertained that Mr Frere, the British Minister, had not yet arrived, I proceeded to the house of the Duchess of Osuna, and delivered the dispatches to Lord William Bentinck. His Lordship questioned me very particularly upon the state of affairs in the north; and regarding the strength and position of the French army, it was quite evident that the Spanish government either had not the means of obtaining accurate information from the immediate scene of action, or, having become possessed of it, did not impart what they knew to the confidential and intelligent person then acting for the British government. Lord William Bentinck

knew with certainty nothing as to the real state of the war on the Ebro, nor had he been made acquainted either with the force of the enemy, or of the Spanish armies, now in progress to become the assailants, and who were advancing with misguided confidence to certain destruction.

On the evening of the 7th Mr Frere arrived. He directed me to remain until after his first interview with the Central Junta, then at Aranjuez, where he proposed going the following day. Numerous reports occupied the public attention during the short period of my residence in Madrid, and daily assemblages of the people took place at the Puerta del Sol to discuss the popular topics of the day, and to criticise with unsparing severity the conduct of the generals in command,—particularly Castaños, who was supposed by the mobility to have exhibited either supineness or treason, they *wisely calculating* that the person who had gained the battle of Baylen, and occasioned the surrender of the army of Dupont, could, without hesitation or difficulty, have driven the main body of the enemy across the Pyrenees, or led them captive to Madrid!

Tolerably accurate information at last reached the capital as to the arrival of the grand army in Spain; and reports were circulated that the enemy

had advanced to Burgos; but no incidental particulars were either known or fabricated. The quiet and security that had for a short period blinded the inhabitants of Madrid was destined soon to give place to other scenes; and from the 10th November disastrous events followed each other in rapid succession, until confidence became annihilated, and all ranks awakened to a sense of the real situation of affairs, and to see through the false data upon which a partial success had induced the Spanish government to proceed.

From the information now received by Lord William Bentinck, it became very problematical whether I should be enabled again to join General Leith at Santander; but having received his Lordship's instructions to proceed to the north, and Mr Frere having given me charge of his dispatches for England, I left Madrid upon the morning of the 10th, and having posted all night, arrived at noon the following day at Aranda de Duero, where I met with convincing proofs of the French army having resumed the offensive. The town was crowded with Spanish soldiery; and I soon ascertained that the army of Estremadura, the head-quarters of which were now in Aranda, had been defeated near to Burgos on the preceding day.

The Conde de Belvedere, having received intelli-

gence of the enemy's advance, assembled the main body of his army at the village of Gamonal, and sent forward the Mariscal de Campo Henestrosa, with a column of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, to Villa Fria. Henestrosa soon came in contact with the light cavalry of the French army, and beat them back; but with true Spanish confidence, instead of ascertaining the real nature of the attack, or the force brought against him, he followed up what he considered an advantage gained, and before he was aware, had become committed with a greatly superior body, by which he was forced back upon the army posted at Gamonal.

The Walloon and Spanish guards fought for some time with considerable determination and coolness, but the arrival of the Duke of Istria with the cavalry, put a period to the action. The Spanish cavalry did not await the issue of a charge; but, upon being approached by that of the enemy, turned and fled in all directions, leaving the flanks of the army completely unprotected. Even with well-disciplined and experienced infantry, this would have been a serious position of affairs; but with the class of troops forming the Estremaduran army, the effect was instantaneous and conclusive; the whole gave

way, the French entering Burgos pêle-mêle with the fugitives.

As is invariably the case with undisciplined troops, the Spaniards entertained an overstrained impression of the resistless effect of an attack of cavalry. A kind of panic always attended the appearance of that description of force, nor did they overcome the feeling during the course of the Peninsular war. It had subsequently fatal results in more than one action, where the conduct of the infantry was otherwise steady, and such as for a time to balance success even with the imperial troops themselves.

The Emperor Napoleon had from Vittoria directed the movement executed by Marshal Soult with the second corps. The imperial head-quarters arrived at Briviesca on the evening of the 9th, and a night march from that place brought the Duke of Dalmatia in contact with the Spaniards on the morning of the 10th, as above stated.

Napoleon with his guards followed the movement of the second corps d'armée, at the same time having ordered forward the Duke of Istria with an overwhelming force of heavy cavalry to complete the impression he did not doubt would be made by Marshal Soult. The Spaniards suffered very severely in the action, and their broken infantry continued to b

sabred without intermission through the city of Burgos, now deserted by its inhabitants, and given up to plunder.

On the 8th, Burgos had contained a population following their different avocations in apparent security; it was also crowded with Spanish troops: every thing appeared cheerful, and calculated to inspire confidence. Upon the 10th it was deserted, and occupied solely by the dead bodies of its countrymen, while the rush of fugitives, and the crash of pursuing cavalry, gave at intervals a dreadful variety to the scene, rendered more awful by the incessant fire of artillery, and the noises produced by the work of pillage, which had commenced in all directions. The Conde de Belvedere, upon ascertaining the total defeat of the corps under Henestrosa's command, fell back with precipitation, and continued his retrograde movement until he reached Aranda, on the morning of the 11th, having then retired sixty miles from the field of battle.

Nothing could exceed the confusion and bustle which attended the arrival of this disorganized and tumultuous host. The streets became crowded with the soldiery: horsemen were to be seen passing in all directions: strings of mules, carrying off families with their effects: peasants anxiously listening

to details of what had, and what probably would, occur; and all order or discipline apparently having received a fatal shock from the events of the preceding day.

The square or plaça, in which the Conde de Belvedere was quartered, I found occupied by a crowd, evidently in a state of great excitement. This was occasioned by the detection of a Spaniard, said to be employed as a spy, and who had been taken in the act of procuring information. The crowd was so dense, that to penetrate into the square was impracticable; I, therefore, determined patiently to await the result. The culprit had been conveyed to the part of the plaça fronting the general's quarter, and soon after, some officers, one of whom was the Conde himself, appeared at a balcony, and addressed the populace. The noise and incessant clamour from beneath, prevented his being heard at any distance; but I was informed his address was directed with a request to the enraged multitude that they would spare the life of the offender until he might be regularly tried and punished. This temperate appeal appeared not to have the slightest effect; on the contrary, greater agitation seemed to prevail, and when looking with anxiety for the finale of this singular scene, without any indication of instantaneous action,

or any alteration in the position of the people, and while the Conde and his staff were still in the balcony, I perceived the ponderous swords of some Spanish dragoons hacking at what it could not for a moment be doubted was the person of the unfortunate spy. There was no shriek, no sound of lamentation heard; the deed was done; the Conde and his officers entered the window from whence they had appeared, and the crowd gradually and quietly dispersed.

The Conde de Belvedere, a very young man, perfectly unaccustomed to command, had been left in charge of the Estremaduran army at this most critical moment,—a circumstance in unison with the other arrangements of the Spanish government, and by which a general, in whom no confidence could be placed, was permitted to hold the temporary command of an army critically situated at one of the most important periods of the war.

Probably no talent or science could have obstructed the advance of the French army; but it appears most inexcusable to have exposed this body of troops, particularly upon the great route to the capital, without its being conducted by an officer capable of manœuvring under such circumstances; for it is evident, upon every rational military principle, that the Estremaduran army ought not to have been com-

mitted at Burgos. Nothing was to be gained by an action, even if success, in the first instance, had been the result; for Marshal Soult, driven back, would have retired upon the army led by the Emperor, marching in his rear, and which must have overwhelmed the Spanish troops; whereas, in the more probable event, that of defeat, they had no reinforcements upon which a retrograde movement could bring them; nor was there a single battalion to join the ranks between Aranda and the Somasierra. Had the Estremaduran army retired upon the advance of the enemy, it might have formed a junction with the troops from the south, and, placed in position on the Somasierra mountain, contested that very strong ground, and occasioned, at all events, a great loss to the enemy. Disheartened and weakened by its disasters at Burgos, its artillery taken, troops dispersed, its cavalry absolutely unserviceable, and wandering over the face of the country, it was no longer formidable in any respect. By this injudicious affair, some of the best Spanish infantry became shaken in discipline and in confidence to a degree never restored during the long and arduous struggle in which they subsequently became engaged.

The Conde de Belvedere imparted to me the information he possessed as to the movements of the

enemy. He informed me of his intention to retire, and that he only remained at Aranda for the purpose of assembling the fugitives, and enabling those who had escaped by lateral lines of road to rejoin their colours. The Conde made a great case of the desperate resistance of General Henestrosa's corps, and as some excuse appeared necessary for any thing like disaster having befallen the Spanish troops, he wished to attribute the defeat of the 10th to treason. How, or where, that existed, he did not explain; and probably to have done so satisfactorily would have been difficult.

Before leaving Aranda, I wrote to Lord William Bentinck, informing him of these reverses. The route by Burgos being effectually obstructed, determined me to proceed to the left, and, by making a detour, avoid the country occupied by the enemy's troops, and regain the coast. With this object in view, on the morning of the 12th, I mounted a post horse, and took the road to Sotillo, on which were numerous parties of dispersed soldiery moving towards Aranda to rejoin their respective regiments.

As I proceeded towards Palencia, various reports were in circulation concerning the motions of the enemy, but all agreeing in the unwelcome intelligence that he was very rapidly advancing.

Part of Marshal Soult's corps had entered Lerma

on the night of the 11th, and it was reported that French cavalry had been seen in the direction of Palencia. Calculating on the probability of this latter rumour not being authentic, and anxious to make as short a circuit as possible, I continued my journey, and having passed through Sotillo and Tortoles, arrived at Cabeça Nabero, without having obtained any certain information as to the more immediate quarters of the enemy; but at Baltanas, two leagues in advance, the Alcalde informed me that his cavalry were at Torquemada, also at Palencia, and that his advanced posts were at the distance of a short league. Under these circumstances, I considered the only safe proceeding was to return as far as Cabeça Nabero, and at twelve o'clock at night, again entered that village.

Some of the fugitive hussars of Valencia had arrived there from Burgos, and six of them offered to accompany me on the following morning, in any direction removed from the track of the French army. Valladolid appeared, under the circumstances, to be the nearest route, not obstructed by the presence of the enemy's troops, that could now be adopted in proceeding to the north, and at daylight on the 13th I sallied forth, escorted by the hussars, in the direction of that city. As we proceeded, constant reports of

the proximity of the French cavalry were in circulation, but so contradictory, and apparently exaggerated, that I determined to persevere until some certain information could be obtained. Having passed through the villages of Castilla de la Pena and Esgavillas, after travelling for nine hours during heavy rain, we arrived at Tudela on the Duero. Remote as this day's journey was from the scene of action, the roads continued to be strewed with dispersed soldiery from Gamonal.

The cura of Tudela received me with great kindness and hospitality. His house became the receptacle of numerous visitors, anxious to obtain intelligence as to the probability of the enemy's approach. That he already occupied Valladolid they had ascertained, and the cura informed me that nearly the whole population of the town were prepared to make their escape whenever a visit from the French became certain.

As we were only two leagues from Valladolid upon the same bank of the Duero, it became important to investigate the nature of the information which the inhabitants of Tudela had obtained of the enemy's movements. I was soon satisfied upon this subject, from the terror that appeared to prevail, as well as the apparent bustle and activity, indicating the ne-

cessity felt by all classes to prepare for immediate departure.

Never did the people of Tudela pass so anxious or sleepless a night. Constantly moving about, its inhabitants looked forward to daybreak with unceasing alarm, and frequent were the visits of consultation paid to the cura, who appeared to have great influence, and to possess their entire confidence.

At six o'clock in the morning, my Asturian servant rushed into the room in a state of great alarm, informing me that the French cavalry were said to be close to the town. A very few minutes elapsed before I was across the Duero, having passed the bridge amidst a crowd of the inhabitants forming a most singular cavalcade, men, women, children, cattle, sheep, horses and cars, covering the whole road, and flying in the utmost confusion. The Valencian hussars, with an *alertness* highly praiseworthy in that class of light cavalry, had, the previous night, marched to the rear, without any intimation of such being their intention, or having had the civility to request that I should accompany them.

Having extricated myself from the line of march adopted by the population of Tudela, I proceeded to Valdestillas, where post horses were to be procured; and after passing through Rueda, recrossed the Du-

ero by the bridge of Tordesillas. The inhabitants of that town appeared perfectly tranquil, expressing no alarm on the subject of French visitation; nor had they heard of the enemy's cavalry having penetrated into the district in their vicinity. Under these circumstances, I had hopes of having turned the part of the country subjected to his inroads, and of being permitted to proceed upon my journey without difficulty or obstruction.

Late at night, I left Tordesillas, posted to Beja, from thence to Villar de Fraydes, to Villalpando, to San Estevan, and to Villa Nueva del Campo. In the course of this route, no intelligence of the enemy was obtained. It therefore appeared probable that the utmost extent of his advance had been to the neighbourhood of Palencia and Valladolid, and that, consequently, I might now, with safety, take a road more to the right, and a nearer line to the point at which it was my object to arrive. I therefore struck across the country, and in the evening arrived at the village of Veçilla, where I again experienced the hospitality of the Spanish clergy, taking up my quarters in the house of the Cura de Santa Maria.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 16th, accompanied by two peasants and my servant, I took the road to Villada, on which we had not proceeded above

a league, when, through the mist, horsemen appeared upon the road advancing directly towards us. We immediately halted, and soon ascertained they were dragoons. Upon perceiving us, they retired with precipitation. Supposing them to be a patrol of the enemy's cavalry,—for doubtful as was the light, the brazen casque and streaming horse-hair proclaimed without doubt the country to which they belonged, —I lost not a moment in following their example in the opposite direction, and galloped back to Vecilla. The extremely dense mist and darkness of the morning must have deceived these soldiers as to the quality of the party they encountered; for of the four, I was the only armed person, and that very slightly, my friends the hussars having relieved me from the encumbrance of my pistols during our journey from Cabeça Nabero to Tudela.

After this certain indication of the enemy's troops being scattered over the whole face of the country, I abandoned all hopes of being enabled to return to Santander, resolving to adopt the most direct route to Leon, and to be regulated as to future proceedings by the information I should receive in that city.

The cavalry I had heard of in every direction since leaving Aranda was ascertained to be the force under the Duke of Istria, dispatched immediately after the

affair at Gamonal to suppress the insurrection, and strike terror into the minds of the inhabitants of Old Castille. Unresisted—for no troops opposed their advance—these horsemen swept over the face of the country. The towns through which they passed were either deserted, or the inhabitants subjected to heavy contributions. All thoughts of contending against them vanished; and the impression made was even greater than the circumstances warranted. Nor was this to be wondered at. The people, who, a few days previously, had been led to expect information of the flight or annihilation of the French army, if they heard at all of what had recently happened, obtained the intelligence from dispersed soldiery, whose descriptions were, of course, frequently charged with exaggeration; and before they had time to recover from the shock received by the communication of these reverses, the enemy's cavalry was at their gates.

At this period of the war, Sir John Moore was at Salamanca with the main body of the British army, Sir David Baird at Astorga, and General Hope, with the artillery and stores, making an unnecessary and dangerous detour by Talavera de la Reyna, the Escorial, and the Guadarama pass.

From Veçilla, I regained the great road at Mal-

lorga; from thence proceeded to Mansilla de las Mulas, and at 12 o'clock at night entered Leon.

The city of Leon, and capital of the kingdom of that name, is beautifully situated between the rivers Vernesga and Torio, which, forming a junction to the south of the town, fall into the Esla between Mansilla and Valencia de Don Juan. Leon was founded by the Emperor Trajan, and derives its name from one of the Roman legions. It is irregularly built, the streets narrow, and ill paved, and the houses generally insignificant in appearance; but it possesses a magnificent cathedral, founded by Don Ordona, second king of Leon. It was destroyed by the Moorish king Almanzor, at the close of the tenth century, but restored by Don Pelayo, who directed the works, which, in the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries, led to the completion of the present splendid edifice.

The building is of the most florid style of Gothic architecture; nothing can be more beautiful than the rich and elaborate carving of the western and southern entrances, the former of which is the principal portal. The windows, of stained glass, are of great magnitude, extending nearly the whole height of the cathedral, and giving to the interior a very grand effect.

There is an old Spanish saying, illustrative of the peculiar style of the different cathedrals;

Toledo en riqueza,
Compostela en fortaleza,
Y Leon in sutileza:

thus giving Leon pre-eminence in the delicacy and beauty of the work.

The principal buildings, exclusive of the churches and convents, are the houses of the Duque de Uçeda, the Conde de Luna, and the Marques de Caraçena. The walls of Leon are very ancient, but have been repaired, and in some places rebuilt, in more modern times. One of the gates of the city is called Del Castillo, having been erected in 1759, near to the site of the once celebrated state prison of that name.

At Leon, some of the officers of the British Commissariat had arrived, and Colonel Nicolay of the Staff Corps, employed by Sir David Baird to procure information, was at Mansilla, but from none of these persons was to be obtained the slightest intelligence of the Marques de la Romana; nor had they heard the result of the operations of the Gallician army, upon which, of course, his motions, as also those of General Leith, must in a great measure depend. In this state of uncertainty, it appeared to

me most important to proceed direct to the coast of Asturias, and send Mr Frere's dispatches by the earliest conveyance to England.

On the evening of the 18th November, I left Leon, with the intention of crossing the mountains to Oviedo. The view from the heights, on the road to La Robla, looking back upon the plain on which the city is placed, is very beautiful, the country being rich in cultivation, and luxuriantly wooded.

From La Robla to Buiza, the road is extremely bad, frequently intersected by mountain torrents, which, being swollen by the heavy rain that had fallen, became, in some instances, nearly impassable.

After leaving Buiza, the road leads over one of those passes so frequent in the North of Spain, but that of Pajares exceeds in roughness and intricacy all those I had previously travelled. To the difficulties of this mountain track, were, on this occasion, to be added an extremely dark night, and a violent storm of wind and rain, rendered doubly irksome by the impossibility of urging the wretched horse I rode into a pace calculated speedily to overcome the misery of this most tedious and apparently interminable stage. At last, however, after having had more than one roll amongst the rocks, and with the prospect of occasionally accompanying some of the mountain streams

into the valleys to which they were rushing with great rapidity, I arrived at the town of Pajares, having been seven hours and a half in travelling sixteen miles.

On arriving at Oviedo, the procurador-general of the province, and General Ballesteros, informed me of the disasters that had befallen the unfortunate army of the left; that it had been completely defeated; that Generals Açevedo, Requelmè, and the Conde San Roman, had been killed; that the survivors had dispersed, and sought safety by flight into the mountains of Leon,—the procurador-general declaring, with a countenance combining an expression of solemnity, melancholy, and despair, that the whole was to be attributed to the treason of General Blake! I had heard so much of the treason attributed to Spanish generals, whenever a remarkable occurrence was to be accounted for, that this communication passed unquestioned. As usual, any thing like a correct statement of facts was not to be obtained; even the intelligent General Ballesteros appeared to know that defeat had overtaken the Gallician army; but as to authentic detail, he was in perfect ignorance.

Having failed in obtaining any positive information at Oviedo, where either the Marques de la Romana, or General Leith, was to be found, it was

unnecessary for me to delay in that city. In the evening, therefore, I rode to Gihon, where, having delivered the dispatches to Mr Hunter, to be by him transmitted to Mr Canning, I once more took the road by the coast towards Santander, and arrived at Villaviciosa. On the route, in advance of that village, I met the Baron Almendarez, with the four cavalry regiments of the division from the North, who informed me, that when he marched from Santander, General Leith was still there. This determined me to proceed in that direction; but upon reaching Colunga, I obtained certain information of his having quitted that town.

The next report that met me was his having gone by Infiesta to Oviedo. It was possible he might have taken this mountain road; at all events, it was quite unnecessary for me to proceed to Santander; and I resolved to strike across the country in hopes of joining him on his route.

The town of Infiesta, in the centre of the great chain of the Ariales, is beautifully placed in a valley on the bank of the Ribadecella river. The mountains ascend precipitously to the north, but are luxuriantly covered with chestnut, and other trees of great magnitude and richness of foliage. It is difficult to conceive scenery more varied and picturesque,

than that through which the road from Colunga to Infiesta is conducted.

General Leith had neither arrived at, nor passed near to, that place. Disappointed and uncertain what route to adopt, I at last resolved upon returning to Oviedo, and in consequence made strenuous application to the Alcalde for horses. Whether his authority was slight, or he was lukewarm in attending to the requisition, I cannot determine, but certainly the delay was greater than I had yet experienced anywhere under similar circumstances.

At length the horses were produced, and after sunset we were on the road to Oviedo, guided by a peasant, who, either from ignorance, or the darkness that prevailed, lost the road, and conducted us to the bank of a river, which he had previously informed me it was necessary to ford. After having travelled about a league from Infiesta, not doubting his knowledge of the route, and being in front of the party, I urged my horse into the stream; nor was it long before it became proved to be any thing but a ford into which I had been erroneously led; for, after several plunges, the horse lost his footing, and it was with difficulty that he regained the bank from whence he had entered. The guide made many protestations of regret, but as he had cautiously ab-

stained from following my example, in entering the river, it is not improbable that he had some slight idea of its depth, at the same time not exactly agreeing with me in the estimate formed of the value of my safety, provided he recovered his horse, which, under all circumstances, he had a fair prospect of succeeding in.

La Pola, the nearest village on the route, was four leagues distant. The night excessively cold. I was drenched with water; the guide apparently uncertain where he was, and the darkness such that no object could be distinguished at any distance. Few situations in the annals of travelling can be conceived less enviable. To discover a habitation of some description became most desirable. That there were such in the neighbourhood the peasant declared to be his belief. After proceeding a short distance, it was with no slight degree of satisfaction we discovered a light, not far removed from the bank of the river, which, when approached, proved to come from the window of a cottage. The inmates of this humble dwelling received us with the utmost cordiality and kindness. Our appearance at that late hour must have occasioned considerable surprise, as well as distrust, but the moment the reason for it was explained all restraint appeared to have vanished, while every

effort was made by these poor peasants to render their habitation as comfortable as possible.

The arrival of General Caro at Oviedo on the 24th of November, at last put me in possession of certain information. From him I learnt that the Marques de la Romana, and General Leith, had gone to Leon by Potes—that the remains of the Gallician army were there assembling—and that, without doubt, I should meet them in the neighbourhood of that city.

At 10 o'clock at night I once more left Oviedo, passed the Puerta de Pajares under more favourable circumstances, both of light and the state of the atmosphere, than formerly, and the following evening had the satisfaction of joining the Marques and General Leith at the Palace of the Bishop of Leon.

Thus terminated a journey of above 900 miles, in the course of which a considerable portion of the country had been traversed under circumstances that enabled me to ascertain the sincere feeling of the people. It is but justice to state, that in the whole course of it, I met with but one sentiment as to the war; that I was everywhere treated with kindness, and my progress facilitated, even under circumstances where individuals suffered inconvenience from their horses or mules being put into requisition. Unaccompanied by any British subject, I passed in

safety at all hours of the day and night. Nothing could have been easier than to have terminated my career, and carried the dispatches to the enemy, without the event ever being ascertained, notwithstanding which my progress was unimpeded in any one instance; nor, with the exception of the river scene, near Infiesta, was my safety ever compromised. I mention this as a creditable circumstance to the inhabitants of the Peninsula, and in contradiction to the statements often recorded, unjustly in my opinion, of the want of faith, of supineness, and of perfidy, in the Spanish people.

The Marques de la Romana had unfortunately arrived too late to take the command of his army; he had the mortification to find it had been completely defeated. The first troops he met were flying in the greatest disorder, dispersing in the mountains, half famished, without shoes, many wounded, and all in a state of misery and exhaustion.

It was out of the question to attempt the reorganization of the Gallician army anywhere near the enemy. The only chance, therefore, was to indicate a rallying point considerably to the rear, there, once more to collect the fugitives into the appearance of an army. With this object, the Marques had

retired to Leon, where his exertions were strenuous and incessant. Unfortunately, the brunt of the actions fought by General Blake had fallen upon the veteran soldiers of the division from the north, few remaining of those fine regiments that had been restored to their country by the man, who, of all others, posterity will admit, conducted himself invariably, during the struggle, with a firmness, an integrity, a prudence, and a courage, worthy the best days of the Spanish monarchy, or the noblest records of patriotism.

The Marques de la Romana appeared at this date to be aged about fifty. Short in stature, without any great look of ability, his countenance, although it did not indicate the firmness of his mind, had an expression of much amiability of disposition. I was present at his first interview with General Blake, after the disasters of his army: it was conducted by the Marques with the utmost mildness; no expression of irritation or disappointment escaped him, the only restraint appearing on the part of the defeated general.

Ever since the affair of Durango, on the 31st of October, the army of the left had been subjected to a series of reverses, having been closely followed up by Marshal the Duke of Bellano in the direction of

Espinosa, and by the Duke of Dantzic in that of Villarcayo.

General Blake occupied a strong position at Espinosa, where he had at last concentrated his whole army, with the exception of the fourth division, which had previously been cut off, and forced back upon Portugalete. In this situation he was attacked by the Duke of Belluno on the 10th, but, after fighting the whole day with very equivocal success, the position was in some points maintained.

On the following day the French Marshal renewed his attack: the Asturian infantry gave way: their example was followed by the left of the army: the battle was irretrievably lost: the whole fled with rapidity in the utmost confusion, leaving their cannon, ammunition, and baggage, in the hands of the enemy. Never was victory more complete, for that instant the Spanish army ceased to have existence. All that remained of it was a tumultuous mob, half famished, without officers, many having thrown away their arms, and all being dispirited and wretched to a degree.

Thus, by the combinations of the Emperor Napoleon, the Spanish armies of the centre and the left were attacked and overwhelmed at the same moment. These operations, however, formed but a subordinate

part of the plan he had arranged for the campaign. While Marshals Soult and Victor were destroying two Spanish armies at different points, General Castaños was on the eve of being attacked and defeated; the most important movement of the whole, the march upon Madrid, being carried into effect by the Emperor himself.

It was when these events had occurred, or were rapidly arriving at consummation, that a British auxiliary force arrived in Spain. One month earlier, it might have produced the most powerful as well as most beneficial effect; but the time was past. A body of really good troops, co-operating with the Spanish armies, and vigorously attacking the French before they became reinforced, might have totally changed the aspect of affairs; but what great impression was to be expected from 30,000 British taking the field against the enormous strength of the enemy, particularly after the total discomfiture of every Spanish force with which they were destined to act, or by joining whom they might in any degree assimilate in numbers to those opposed?

On the 13th October, Lieutenant-General Sir David Baird arrived at Coruña. The same day of the *following month* Sir John Moore, with the advance of his army, entered Salamanca. General Hope,

with the artillery, two regiments of light cavalry, and 3000 infantry, was in the neighbourhood of Madrid on the 22d November. Such were the arrangements as to time and combination of movement with which commenced the operations of Sir John Moore's army!

Very nearly a month was lost in consequence of the detour which want of information had occasioned General Hope to make on his march to Salamanca; while false intelligence induced Sir David Baird to retire from Astorga to Villafranca.—Where promptitude was important, nothing could be more unfortunate than these false movements.

It was on the 27th November that General Leith left Leon to join the British army, having received orders to that effect. Upon that day the headquarters continued at Salamanca; Sir David Baird was at Astorga, with his corps cantoned to his rear upon the Coruña road; General Hope at the southern entrance of the Guadarama pass. Fortunately, the Duke of Dantzic with the fourth corps d'armée had not yet occupied it, although in full march for that purpose. Had he done so, it would have been impracticable for General Hope to have formed a junction with the main body of the British army, and the whole must have retired on Portugal.

This is a tolerably convincing proof, that during the Peninsular war the leaders of the French army were not always possessed of the best information. Much has been written on the conduct of Spanish authorities, British agents, and others, in not affording prompt or accurate intelligence: it perhaps never was in any country more difficult to procure. The victorious enemy; the defeated Spanish general; the favoured ally, were all subjected to this serious inconvenience; nor was it until a later period of the war that a more perfect and certain detail of events was ever obtained. The improvement in gaining information, and a better-regulated scheme of ascertaining the validity of reports, was one consequence of experience in campaigning.

The Duke of Dantzic with his whole corps, marching diagonally across the country to the Guadarama mountains, might without difficulty have intercepted the British convoy, had he been aware either of its situation or its strength.

Lieut.-General Lord Paget had joined the army with the 7th, 10th, and 15th hussars. The élite of no army could produce three more brilliant regiments of their class, either as to appearance and equipment, or the really gallant spirit with which they were inspired. Their superiority over the

cavalry of the enemy was more conspicuous in this, than in any other of the Peninsular campaigns. The head-quarters of Lord Paget were at Astorga on the 1st of December.

Astorga, the ancient Asturica Augusta, was formerly a place of great strength, and is surrounded by a wall, having every appearance of antiquity. Near to the city is the ruined castle of the Marques de Astorga, a building of great extent, and apparent baronial importance. The cathedral is neither celebrated for its elegance or magnitude, being in every respect very inferior to that of Leon.

On the 2d of December, General Leith set off to join his brigade, consisting of the Royal 26th and 81st regiments, at Villafranca. The weather was now very inclement, and as we ascended the mountains from Astorga, the cold became extreme. The spacious and well-conducted Camino Real, winds gradually up to the wretched village of Manzanal, from whence the road descends to Torrè. Both these places were completely crowded with troops. It was with the utmost difficulty that accommodation could be obtained, without dislodging some of the officers of two regiments in possession of the only tolerable house. This, however, through the exertions of Co-

lonel Nichols, and Major Wood, of the 14th regiment, was accomplished.

At daybreak we continued to descend into the valley, leading towards Villafranca. The road is extremely good; the scenery wild and beautiful. Villafranca del Bierzo is a considerable town, very romantically situated, watered by a clear stream of some magnitude. It is surrounded by rising ground, clothed with the finest wood. The Plaza Mayor is large and regular, both in its area and buildings; it is superior to the square of most Spanish towns of a similar class. At the southern entrance, the first house on the left is the chateau of the Marques de Villafranca, a very spacious but apparently neglected building.

On the 4th of December the brigade continued its retreat towards the coast; it halted that night at Herrerias; the 5th at Nogales; the 6th at Constantin and Sobrado. On the 7th we arrived at Lugo, (the Lucus Augusti of the Romans,) which is one of the most considerable towns of the province. It is surrounded by an ancient wall, having towers at certain distances around its whole extent. It is the seat of a bishopric, and is situated on the river Minho, the principal stream that waters the kingdom of Gallicia. The retreat of Sir David Baird's

corps terminated at Lugo. Upon the morning of the 9th orders were received to march back with the least possible delay to Asterga.

The situation of the British army was now destined to undergo a very important alteration. After having determined to retire from the Spanish territory, the General-in-chief, yielding to circumstances, to the pressing solicitations of the Spanish authorities, and to the bold opinions of the British minister, resolved to make a dangerous effort for the country which he had been sent to assist, but which *reasonable* persons expected he was to liberate.

The circumstance which more immediately produced this change of plan was the resistance threatened by the town of Madrid, the nature of which was communicated to the British head-quarters in a very exaggerated shape. Unfortunately the fall of the capital soon became known; but having once resolved, Sir John Moore was not to be shaken in his determination. He ordered Lord Paget, with the cavalry of Sir David Baird's corps, to his front; and without waiting for the arrival of its infantry, marched forward in the direction of Valladolid, where he expected to assemble a large portion of his force on the 16th.

When the army moved from Salamanca, it was in

the contemplation of its general to advance upon Burgos, thereby to obstruct the communications of the French army at Madrid. No circumstance can more strongly prove the want of information as to the position and strength of the different corps of the enemy, than this fact; for without detaching a single battalion from the army commanded in person by the emperor, 40,000 French, with a large force of cavalry, could have been assembled on the plains of Old Castille. It was under a false impression of the British army having retired upon Portugal that Napoleon advanced upon Madrid. Had he been aware of its real situation, to march in that direction would have been his first movement; nor was it until in possession of the capital that he received certain information of Sir John Moore's having united his different corps, and being in the act of commencing offensive operations.

On the 13th of December the head-quarters left Salamanca. The British general advanced unaided by, or in communication with, any Spanish force, excepting the remains of the army of the left, under the Marques de la Romana, who continued to occupy Leon with that weak and inefficient force;—this, with about 5000 Asturian recruits under General Ballesteros, that had not yet been engaged, being

the only Spanish force now in the field in the whole north of Spain. Sir John Moore had no friendly corps to protect his flanks—no reinforcements to expect. He commanded an army, brilliant in appearance, yet weak in numerical strength; but upon that, and that alone, was dependence to be placed for the successful result of a very bold advance against a superior enemy in his front, a corps nearly as strong as his own upon his right flank, and the whole army of the emperor unoccupied, and ready to move against him whenever he had penetrated into the country.

In stating that a superior force was in front of the British army, it must not be supposed to apply to the corps d'armée of Marshal Soult alone, but included that of the Duke of Abrantes, then between Vittoria and Burgos. The most inexplicable part of the enemy's operations at this moment was the persevering march of the Duke of Dantzic, the object of which originally was to proceed by Badajos, and intercept the retreat upon Lisbon. For this purpose he had moved diagonally across the country, towards the Guadarama, the advance of his cavalry being at Arevalo on the 30th of November. It is inconceivable that General Hope should have passed within a few leagues, and the event not reported, or

the direction taken by his column ascertained. Had the French Marshal, judging that the British were not retiring, then halted, watched the motions of Sir John Moore, and marched direct upon Astorga, when the British had already crossed the Esla, the consequences might have been most disastrous.

The situation of the several corps of the French army, when Sir John Moore advanced from Salamanca, was as follows:—The Duke of Dalmatia at Sahagun, Saldanha, and the villages in that neighbourhood on the river Carrion—Marshal the Duke of Treviso moving upon Zaragosa—the Duke of Abrantes, with the eighth corps, at Vittoria—Marshal Lefebre, with the fourth corps, beyond the Guadarama—Marshal Lasnes upon the Ebro—and the Emperor Napoleon, with the Imperial Guard, the first and sixth corps d'armée, at Madrid.

At Alaejos an intercepted dispatch made Sir John Moore acquainted with the true situation of Marshal Soult's corps, as also of that commanded by the Duke of Abrantes, composed of the same troops that had capitulated at Lisbon in the month of August, and were now rapidly advancing to the line of operations. It also communicated the tranquillity of Madrid, after having opened its gates to the emperor; and the false impression at the French head-

quarters as to the position or intentions of the British army. This intelligence produced an immediate alteration in the plan of the campaign. Instead of continuing his movement upon Valladolid, the British general turned short to his left, crossed the Duero, and on the 15th established his head-quarters at Toro. Sir David Baird's corps was now in communication with the main body of the army. General Hope had effected a junction with it; and the whole force was in a very concentrated situation. The cavalry had frequent affairs with the enemy's posts, in which they were invariably successful. A strong proof of the inertness with which the French troops at times acted, is to be deduced from the circumstance of no less than ten regiments of their cavalry being at this moment in the neighbourhood of Valladolid, without having ascertained the movements of the British. It was from three deserters that Napoleon first learned the important fact of their advance towards the Esla.

Sir John Moore arrived at Castro Nuevo on the 18th, continued his march by Villalpando and Valderas to Mallorga, which became head-quarters on the 20th. Upon the junction of the troops from Portugal and Coruña, an alteration occurred in the formation of the army.—Sir David Baird was placed

in command of a division, while General Manningham, from the temporary command of a division, returned to his former brigade. Major-General Leith was by this arrangement removed to that consisting of the 51st, 59th, and 76th regiments.

At Lugo, General Leith had been attacked by sickness, which prevented his accompanying the troops upon their second advance from that place, rendering it a matter of uncertainty when he would be enabled to proceed. I was extremely anxious to be with the army, and he yielded to my wishes on the subject. On the morning of Sunday the 18th I mounted a post horse, and rapidly followed the track of the army. Having passed through Villafranca, Astorga, La Baneza, Villamanan, and Valencia de Don Juan, I pursued my course uninterruptedly day and night to Mallorga, the head-quarters of the British army. It was late at night on the 20th when I arrived; the town was crowded with troops; not a house unoccupied, or a quarter to be procured. From this dilemma, rendered doubly serious by the intense cold that prevailed, I was relieved by a fortunate rencontre with my friend Captain Patrick, who invited me to his lodging, which, although a poor and comfortless habitation, was luxurious when contrasted with my previous situation—wandering about the

streets of a Spanish village on a wearied post horse, late at night, and the ground covered with snow!

On the morning of the 21st Lieutenant-General Lord Paget marched from Melgar, with two regiments of hussars, in hopes of surprising General Debelle's brigade of dragoons at Sahagun. His Lordship accompanied the 15th. General Slade, with the 10th, marched direct upon the town. The escape of some men from one of the enemy's patrols announced the approach of the fifteenth; this gave him time to mount and form in the vicinity of the town. Disregarding the disparity of numbers, Lord Paget resolved to attack without waiting for the tenth; and confident in the support of that gallant spirit which had characterised the British hussars since their arrival in Spain, he manœuvred to charge with effect, and without delay. General Debelle very inconsiderately awaited the attack, instead of meeting it,—his line keeping up a fire of carbines on the assailants; but the impetus given to the fresh and highbred English horses, and the resolution embodied in the brave soldiers that conducted them, was irresistible; the French line was borne down by the torrent, and retired in disorder; two Chefs d'Escadron, with 170 other officers and

privates, were made prisoners in this short but brilliant affair.

On the night of the 21st the division of Lieutenant-General Sir David Baird advanced from its quarters, and at 10 o'clock marched in the direction of Sahagun. The column moved from Mallorga with the artillery in front; the depth of snow, with some intricacies of the road, rendered more serious by the darkness, occasioned frequent halts, during which the excessive cold was severely felt. It was 2 o'clock in the morning before General Manningham's brigade had accomplished a march of eight miles. At daylight it again proceeded, arriving at Sahagun early in the forenoon of the 22d. The weather continued very inclement, but the numerous convents afforded shelter to the troops.

The commander of the forces received, during the 22d and 23d, various reports of an unfavourable description; first, that Marshal Soult had been reinforced; secondly, that the Duke of Dantzic had halted at Talavera, and was to discontinue his march towards Badajos; thirdly, that Napoleon was advancing against him. Even under these adverse circumstances, he persevered in his intention of beating up the quarters of the 2d corps upon the Carrion. The general officers received their instructions, and

at eight o'clock in the evening, the troops were formed in two columns ready to march against the enemy; but upon the receipt of a second dispatch from the Marques de la Romana, placing the approach of the Emperor beyond doubt, Sir John Moore reluctantly abandoned all intention of a further advance, the march of the troops was countermanded, and they returned to their cantonments.

The intelligence thus received was of the greatest importance. The march upon Carrion would undoubtedly have compromised the safety of the army. Not only the most probable, but the most to be desired, result of that movement, namely, the defeat of Marshal Soult, would but have added to its dangers and difficulties. Had Marshal Soult retired when assailed by the British force, it is probable that its general, being in ignorance of the rapid movement making against him from the Escorial, would have advanced in pursuit; this must have rendered his situation still more critical. In either case, the time lost could not fail to occasion the destruction or capture of the army.

The judgment with which the commander of the forces yielded to these circumstances, the promptitude with which he checked the advance of his army, and the accuracy with which he calculated the exact

moment when retreat became not a measure of expediency alone, but of absolute necessity, appears to be the greatest proof of capacity for command exhibited during the campaign.

On the morning of the 25th of December, the retreat commenced. The weather had completely changed on the preceding day; a rapid thaw succeeded the snow-storm, rain fell in torrents, rendering the roads deep to a degree that impeded the march of the troops, artillery, and baggage. At night, Sir David Baird's division, composed of the Guards, Lord William Bentinck's and General Manningham's brigades, occupied Valencia de Don Juan; on the morning of the 26th, the passage of the river Esla was effected. There was but one boat, of a ponderous description, extremely ill managed, and very slow in its operations; the crossing of the soldiers alone by this conveyance would have occupied the whole day, while the rapid rise of the river rendered it important to gain the right bank with the least possible delay. It having been ascertained that a ford a little lower than the ferry was still practicable, over it great part of the infantry, with the carriages of every description, were passed.

It is difficult to conceive a more gloomy scene. The weather continued as bad as possible, and the

pouring rain was rendered more galling by a piercingly cold wind. The animals of burden, the followers of the army, with the women and children accompanying a column of 8000 men, added to the confusion. Many were seen struggling in the rapid stream that rolled past, while groups on either bank watched their progress. Nothing could be more comfortless than the appearance of all present; but notwithstanding the overturning of cars, the refractory exertions of mules, the terror of the women, and vociferation of the Spaniards, the whole reached the right bank of the Esla without any lives being lost, or any serious accident having occurred. The passage of the river was fortunately timed; for, before night, the flood had increased to a degree that would have rendered it impracticable.

The commander of the forces, with the other divisions of infantry, had marched upon Benevente, crossing the Esla by the bridge of Castro Gonzalo, on the morning of the 26th. Sir David Baird halted on the 27th, the troops of his division occupying Toral, Villamor, and Villamañan.

Upon the British cavalry being withdrawn from Sahagun, the Duke of Dalmatia advanced in pursuit of the army. Fortunately that pursuit was not conducted in the most rapid manner, for when the de-

lay occasioned by attempting to remove the magazines from Benevente is considered, as also, that Sir David Baird's division was nearly six days between Sahagun and Astorga, it does not appear either difficult or improbable that the French Marshal, taking, as he did, the direct route by Mansilla and Leon, might have reached that point previous to the British army. This has always appeared to me to have been the greatest danger attending the retrograde movement from Sahagun; for the unfordable state of the Esla, and destruction of the only bridge upon that river between Mansilla and its junction with the Duero, retarded the advance of Napoleon: On the other hand, Marshal Soult obtained undisputed possession of the bridge of Mansilla, and had nothing in his front to prevent his advancing tête baissée on the communications of the British with Gallicia.

It was on the 21st that Napoleon, then at Madrid, received information of Sir John Moore's march against his second corps d'armée. His resolution, and the carrying it into effect, was like lightning,—the flash was no sooner visible than the thunder rolled; the influence of his mighty genius was instantaneously felt; no delay was permitted to take place; the troops were immediately in motion, and their great

leader rushed to retrieve the errors of his lieutenants. On the 24th he was at Tordesillas, one hundred and twenty miles from Madrid, after having passed his army across the ridge of the Carpentanos, deeply covered with snow, under circumstances that would have effectually obstructed the advance of an ordinary man. The difficulties were such, that the artillery preceding the column of infantry gave up the point, and were returning down the southern ascent of the Guadarama mountain when met by the Emperor. This retrograde movement was occasioned by the increased violence of a hurricane, blowing hail and snow with, it was considered, resistless force. In addition to the report of his officers, the Spanish peasants declared the passage to be attended with the greatest danger. Napoleon ordered his troops to follow him, and immediately proceeded to place himself at the head of the column. Accompanied by the chasseurs à cheval of the guard, he passed through the ranks of the infantry; then formed the chasseurs in close column, occupying the entire width of the road, when, dismounting from his horse, and directing the regiment to follow his example, he placed himself in rear of the leading half squadron, and the whole moved forward. The men, by being dismounted, were, with the exception of those immediately in front, more

sheltered from the storm, while the dense mass trode down the snow, and left a beaten track for the infantry, who, no longer obstructed in the same degree, and inspired by the presence, as well as the example, of Napoleon, pushed forward, and the whole descended to Espinar.

The Emperor, with Marshal Ney's corps, reached Valderas on the 28th; the troops were excessively fatigued, having performed an almost unparalleled march. Still he continued to urge them on, holding forth the certain destruction of the British army as an accession to their glory, and a reward for their toils and their exertions. From Valderas he sent forward General Lefebre-Desnouettes, with the chasseurs of the guard, to press the British rear, and communicate intelligence as to its movements. In the execution of this duty, the General arrived on the left bank of the Esla, opposite to Benevente, on the morning of the 29th. The bridge of Castro Gonzalo had been destroyed. No body of troops appeared, some scattered patrols of cavalry being alone discernible upon the plain. Deceived by these indications of retreat, General Lefebre, having discovered a ford, passed the Esla.

Colonel Otway of the 18th hussars, who commanded the British piquets, made the best disposi-

tion for resistance. Having assembled them, he skirmished, maintaining his ground, and frequently charging the advanced squadrons of the enemy. These encounters continued with various success until the arrival of the 10th hussars, supported by which regiment, the piquets made a decisive attack. The French chasseurs regained the Esla at full speed, closely pursued by the assailants; but instead of breaking their ranks, and dispersing in their flight, they continued in a compact body; and having judged the situation of the ford with accuracy, plunged in, and succeeded in regaining the opposite bank. In this affair, which was well contested on the part of the enemy, he sustained a loss of one hundred and thirty officers and men killed, wounded, and prisoners. Among the latter was General Lefebre. The French regiment here engaged was the same with which Napoleon had forced through the snows of the Guadarama, and for which he had a particular favour.

No farther attempt to cross the Esla was made by the French army during the 29th. In the evening, Lord Paget evacuated Benevente with the cavalry, and retired to La Baneza, both of which towns were the following day visited by Marshal the Duke of Istria, at the head of nine thousand cavalry. The bridge at Castro Gonzalo was repaired during the

30th, and the infantry of the French army passed it in the course of the night.

On the same day, Lieutenant-General Hope's division passed through, and Sir David Baird's entered, Astorga. The weather had again changed; the cold was excessive, and the appearance of the atmosphere indicated an approaching storm. The whole British force was, at this date, with the exception of the reserve and the cavalry, either in Astorga or on the route to Villafranca.

The Marques de la Romana, unable to contend with Marshal Soult, had retired from Leon on his approach, arriving at Astorga with the purpose of crossing the route of Sir John Moore, to retire with his shattered and inefficient force to the valley of the Minho. Nothing could be more wretched than the appearance of the Spanish troops that arrived at Astorga; disease and starvation seemed to struggle for mastery in the annihilation of life. Some of the worn-out wretches, half naked, stretched on the ground, and in the agonies of death, presented a picture of squalid and extenuated misery not to be described.

The British troops finally abandoned Astorga on the 31st. The reserve, commanded by General Edward Paget, was in the rear of the column of infantry, and

with it was the commander of the forces. Lord Paget, with the cavalry, continued close to the enemy.

At Bonillos, General Robert Crawford, with 3000 light infantry, struck off to the left, taking the route by Orense to Vigo. Two reasons have been assigned for this division of force; first, that it was to lessen the difficulties of the commissariat, and, secondly, to secure the left flank of the army. The first may be defended. There appears to have been no necessity for the second. If the left flank was insecure, it could only become so from lateral roads, by which the troops from Astorga might have turned the line of march of the retreating battalions; but to separate from these, and proceed direct for the valley of the Minho, through a distant country, where no enemy had existence, was an extraordinary mode of securing the uninterrupted march of the army.

It was between Benevente and Astorga that the Emperor was overtaken by a courier from Paris with dispatches communicating the hostile dispositions of the Austrian government, and the certainty of an approaching declaration of war. This was the most important dispatch, either with reference to the existence of the powers of Europe or his own personal views, that Napoleon ever received. From it

may be dated every subsequent disaster that befell him; it saved Spain, divided his power, perilled his invincibility, and, by a combination of circumstances, occasioned losses and produced misfortune, that laid the foundation for the Russian war, and finally induced the Emperor Alexander to adopt the bold measure of singly taking the field against the man whom, after Erfurt, he willingly would have conspired against, but did not openly dare to do so.

This alarming communication had an immediate effect upon the Emperor. The pursuit he was anxiously urging, with the utmost celerity, no longer appeared to possess his undivided thoughts. Germany distracted his mind; he was, in idea, upon the banks of the Danube, accompanied by his faithful, his indefatigable guard. Of the numerous army collected at Astorga, he placed twenty thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and fifty pieces of cannon, under the orders of Marshal Soult, directing him to pursue and compel the British either to surrender or embark. The Duke of Elchingen, with his corps, received orders to march in support of the above. There are two routes from Astorga to Villafranca del Bierzo. The one by Bembibre is the most modern, and the best conducted; the other, by Ponteferrada, is the more direct, but worst road. They

meet at the village of Calcabelos. The former was the line adopted by the British, the main body of the enemy pursued by the latter.

The Camino Real, upon which the retreat was conducted, is an excellent road, causewayed where necessary, spacious in all parts, frequently level with the streams rushing through the valleys, and nowhere so steep as to occasion the slightest difficulty to carriages of any description. Favourable as this route would appear for the progress of an army, many circumstances occasioned it to be otherwise when passed by Sir John Moore. In the first place, the severity of the weather, with the rapid transitions from frost and snow to rain, and then again to ice, had broken up its surface and rendered it very deep; the disrepair was, of course, much increased by the march of troops, accompanied by cars, horses, mules, and all the encumbrances of an army. The order of retreat in which the British army moved from Astorga was, first, General M'Kenzie Fraser's division; then General Hope's, followed by that of Sir David Baird; lastly, the Reserve and the cavalry.

A division of French dragoons accompanied each of the columns moving by Ponteferrada and Bembibre. General Franceschi, with the light cavalry, advanced by a valley to the extreme left, with an in-

tention of gaining the main road to Coruña, and coming in front of the retreating force;—an unaccountable movement in such a country as Gallicia, perfectly unsuited as it is to the operations of cavalry. If a column of voltigeurs, unincumbered, and marching with the rapidity of French soldiers, had accompanied him, great annoyance might have resulted; but General Franceschi marched on unsupported by any other arm. This might have succeeded against undisciplined troops, but had he placed his hussars and chasseurs as a barrier to interrupt British infantry and artillery, the consequence would have been his being speedily blown out of the way.

On the morning of the first of January, the commander of the forces, with the reserve, entered Bembibre. Exposure to inclement weather, inexperience in making the best of untoward circumstances, fatigue, and other causes, had occasioned irregularities in the line of march; but these were inconsiderable, until the stores at Bembibre became ransacked. This at once shook the discipline of the regiments; from that town may be dated the really serious aspect of the retreat. The weather, from the commencement, had been severe; the roads not impracticable, but distressingly fatiguing; the men loaded with heavy knapsacks, great-coats, canteens,

ammunition, and their arms; the route knee-deep in some places; a violent wind beating alternately snow, sleet, or rain, directly in their faces; such was the real situation of the infantry soldier during the greater part of the memorable retreat; added to which, he had become irregularly and but scantily fed. At Calcabelos, where, as previously stated, the Ponteferrada and Bembibre roads join, a smart skirmish took place upon the 3d. It was on that occasion alone that the French showed any thing like enterprise in the pursuit. Incited probably by a temporary confusion, occasioned by retreating cavalry patrols and straggling soldiers, General Colbert very inconsiderately charged. The consequence was a serious tirailade from the neighbouring vineyards, which effectually checked the pursuers, and deprived the French army of a very popular and gallant officer.

General Hope's division halted at Lugo upon the 5th. The town was completely occupied by the troops. A more motley scene than that presented within the walls of Lugo at this time can scarcely be imagined. The place is naturally dull. It now assumed an appearance of great activity, of endless bustle; not that of festivity or of commercial importance, but the feverish impulse induced by

terror, inconvenience, injury, and annoyance, on the part of its inhabitants; of comfortless endurance, of all-powerful selfishness, of contemptuous disregard to all feelings but their own, on that of many of its visitors.

On one side was to be seen the soldier of every rank who had secured a habitation to shelter him, but whom duty or inclination occasioned to wander through the crowds of people and deeply mudded streets of the town; on the other, the disconsolate person that made his appearance after the Alcalde's ingenuity had been stretched to the uttermost in procuring quarters for the troops already arrived, and whose *personal friends* had been subjected to the unusual order for admitting strangers. The pitiableness of his case was either to be discovered by a resigned and woeful visage, or by certain ebullitions of temper destined to waste themselves in the desert air. Next were to be seen the conductors of baggage toiling through the streets—their laden mules almost sinking under the weight of ill-arranged burdens swinging from side to side; while the persons, in whose charge they had followed the divisions, appeared undecided which to execrate most, the roads, the mules, the Spaniards, or the weather. These were succeeded by the dull,

heavy sound of the passing artillery; then came the Spanish fugitives from the desolating line of the armies. Detachments with sick or lamed horses scrambled through the mud, while, at intervals, the report of a horse-pistol knelled the termination to the sufferings of an animal that a few days previously, full of life and high in blood, had borne its rider not against, but over, the ranks of Gallic chivalry. The effect of this scene was rendered more striking by the distant report of cannon and musketry, and more gloomy by torrents of rain, and a degree of cold worthy of a Polish winter.

Hitherto the Reserve, with detachments of hussars, had alone been in contact with the enemy. It now became the intention of Sir John Moore to assemble his force, and check the advance of Marshal Soult. On the evening of the 6th, General Hope's division marched in advance of Lugo, and bivouac'd on a position where the whole army was to be concentrated on the following day. The troops were permitted to take up their ground without any annoyance from the enemy. The position occupied by the British was much elevated, and exposed to a piercing north-west wind. Rain fell without intermission; the ground, covered with underwood, was wetted to a degree; neither hut nor tent to shelter from the

elements; the only heat to be procured was flitting, comfortless, and uncertain; the glimmering, pale, expiring fires of the enemy were alone seen at intervals, proving the slight chance we had of producing a brighter blaze; the wet broom emitted dense clouds of smoke that loaded the atmosphere, and almost appeared to give weight and substance to the falling rain. Such was the situation of all ranks in the bivouac at Lugo! Morning dawned; the rain became less violent. The men, suffering from the effects of cold and wet, were without bread, with difficulty preparing some flour and water to appease their craving appetites. Every thing was dreary and comfortless, except the presence of the enemy. There was excitement in that, and not a murmur of complaint was heard.

In the position above mentioned, General Hope's division occupied the left, having General Hill's brigade on his right, Colonel C. Crawfurd's in the centre, and General Leith's on the extreme left of the British line. The rest of the army extended to the right, where it was protected by the river Minho. Early on the morning of the 7th, the enemy showed a large force of cavalry; not formed, but apparently arriving from the rear in very extended order, they moved to the right of the French position. It was

evident the number of troops directly in front had been greatly increased. Cannon were brought to the verge of the ravine which separated the two armies; but as the southern side did not domineer the British position, there was little risk of much impression being made, and the British artillery were immediately placed to silence them. Discharges of cannon were heard at intervals. The light troops skirmished in the ravine, but no serious attack had yet been made; about noon the firing towards our left became more serious, and it was evident a reconnoissance of some importance was meditated. Five pieces of cannon opened upon General Leith's brigade; a column of infantry at the same moment passed the ravine, drove in the outposts, following them rapidly up a road leading directly to the centre of our position. The light companies were thrown out in front, and the regiments stood to their arms. The soldiers posted down the slope of the ravine in extended order, were soon forced back, retiring in some confusion. That the attack was not to be repulsed by the fire of sharpshooters alone was evident; the light companies were consequently assembled, met the enemy when near the summit, poured in one discharge, and rushing forward with the bayonet, drove all before them. Brigade-Major Roberts, and the author of these pages,

accompanied the light infantry, who continued in pursuit, until they reached the commencement of the ascent upon the opposite side.

The road, or lane, up which the French attacked, was flanked by walls, and overhung with trees, being also so narrow as to occasion considerable confusion in the mêlée which took place. Filled with smoke from the incessant and vivid fire of the parties, it was almost impossible to distinguish friend from foe, but our people cheered, and, rushing forward, occasioned great loss to the enemy. When leading the pursuit into the ravine, Major Roberts was wounded, and compelled to retire. Sir John Moore was present during the latter part of this affair, and expressed himself satisfied with the manner in which the attack had been repelled. During the remainder of the day, no attempt was made by the French Marshal to molest his adversary; the weather continued very inclement, and darkness came on, accompanied by a storm rivalling that of the former night.

On the morning of the 8th, the troops were formed along the whole extent of the line anxiously awaiting the expected attack. The commander of the forces early appeared at the left of his army, certainly the most vulnerable point of his position; his centre being placed upon unattackable ground, his right not

to be turned. No movements became visible in the enemy's lines. The Duke of Dalmatia hesitated to bring on an action, for which he had ascertained his opponent was wishful and prepared. I can never look back to the scenes in front of Lugo without a feeling of regret that the battle was not there fought, nor ever bring to recollection the gallant bearing of the troops, under all their miseries, without admiration of the spirit that appeared to animate them, and must have led to certain victory.

After passing the whole morning in expectation, and giving up hopes of an attack, Sir John Moore, to deceive the enemy as to his intention of further retreat, ordered the infantry to erect huts, which was instantly obeyed. Before it became dark, habitations of various descriptions covered the British position. These were abandoned at ten o'clock in the evening, when, in silence, the whole army filed off to the rear, by different routes leading towards Lugo.

Although a matter of necessity, this night-march became a most serious evil. It was excessively dark, the wind blew loud, and hail showers superseded the preceding rains. The track, by which General Leith's brigade marched, was of the roughest and worst description, as may be conjectured from the fact, that untired men took five hours in travelling as

many miles; namely, the distance from the position to the city of Lugo. Without halting in that town, the whole moved forward; but even daylight did not materially improve the state of affairs. The storm raged with increased violence; the country, after passing Lugo, becoming more level, the wind, hail, and sleet, swept resistless across the plains. It was with difficulty, at particular points of the route, that I could prevail upon my horse to face the tempest; at last, the straggling and confused column reached the villages of Guitteriz and Valmeda. These towns were perfectly inadequate to afford accommodation and shelter for the troops. They were, moreover, fully occupied by the cavalry, the commissariat, and the staff. The regiments were consequently marched off the road, and halted in some fields to its right, without even a tree to defend them from the blast, the ground streaming with water, the rain and snow descending in torrents. To men worn down with fatigue, hunger, and want of sleep, this short rest afforded slight comfort. When the order arrived to stand to their arms, and set forward, they rose unrefreshed, foot-sore, weak, and depressed. A second night's march completed the disorganization; the whole road presented a mass not of battalions, but one continuous line of stragglers, mixed in confusion,

without reference to regiment, brigade, or division, pressing onward to the best of their physical ability, but many having lost sight of their officers and their colours.

The state of the weather was at this time peculiarly unfortunate. After leaving the position at Lugo, a forced march became absolutely necessary. The nature of the country through which he had to pass, left Sir John Moore no alternative, but to press on, and avail himself of the advantage gained by the start he had obtained. This was rendered more imperative by the possibility of cavalry acting against him when circumstances had diminished the efficiency of the brilliant force he once possessed of that description. Had the weather been more favourable, the halt at Guitteriz might have been prolonged without compromising the safety of the army; but as it was, the only wise measure seemed to be urging on the infantry to Betanzos; and there halting for the period requisite to assemble the scattered portions of his force, leave the indefatigable Reserve to bring up the rear, as they had hitherto done, in the most soldierlike and gallant manner.

On the morning of the 10th we arrived at Betanzos, with the head-quarters of the regiments, some of whom had not fifty men with their colours.

During the course of the day, however, many joined their ranks, and the alteration produced by a short intermission from fatigue was highly creditable to the soldiers. The battalions that on the morning of the 10th entered Betanzos reduced to skeletons, marched from thence on the 11th strong and effective; the column, composed of all the infantry of the army which ascended the road towards Coruña, was orderly in appearance, and perfectly unlike what could have been expected to reform from the débris of an army, which but the preceding day had exhibited an alarming state of demoralization and exhaustion.

On the 11th, a favourable change had taken place in the state of the weather; the sun shone upon the troops; and as the column ascended the winding road from Betanzos, it presented a very brilliant appearance, more particularly when contrasted with that of the preceding day. It was at Betanzos, and not at Coruña, that the real hardships of the retreat terminated.

Lieutenant-General Hope's division occupied on its arrival the suburb of St Lucía, extending along the western shore of the harbour of Coruña. In these quarters the troops remained until after dark on the evening of the 12th, when they marched to

a position two miles in front of the town, on the Betanzos road. The enemy's fires covered the heights on the opposite side of the river Mero, extending from the village of El Burgo to the ocean. We had the broad and swampy river between us, perfectly unfordable, and the bridge at El Burgo had been destroyed. The night of the 12th was consequently passed without annoyance.

General Hope was on the extreme left, being much the strongest ground of the position, selected by the commander of the forces, and from its elevation the least exposed to the sweeping effects of artillery. On the highest part of the ground, through which the road from El Burgo passes, General Hill's brigade was posted; on his right, General Leith, and a short distance to the rear, prolonging the line to the left, the brigade of Colonel Catlin Crawford; the advanced posts were placed in the valley in front of this line, extending to the village of Palavio Abaxo.

The following morning every thing appeared quiet; the night had passed without rain, a serene and cloudless sky gave promise of more genial weather; nothing seemed likely to produce any immediate excitement, when the explosion of four thousand barrels of powder burst upon the astonished ear. It is

impossible to describe the effect. The unexpected and tremendous crash seemed for the moment to have deprived every person of reason and recollection; the soldiers flew to their arms; nor was it until a tremendous column of smoke, ascending from the heights in front, marked from whence the astounding shock proceeded, that reason resumed its sway. It is impossible ever to forget the sublime appearance of the dark dense cloud of smoke that ascended, shooting up gradually like a gigantic tower into the clear blue sky. It appeared fettered in one enormous mass; nor did a particle of dust or vapour, obscuring its form, seem to escape as it rolled upwards in majestic circles.

A lesser quantity of powder had been first exploded; but the reports succeeded each other nearly instantaneously. Whether from oversight, or supposing our posts sufficiently removed to prevent the danger of accident, I cannot determine; but no notification having been sent to General Leith, a sergeant of the 51st regiment, and two other men belonging to the piquets of his brigade, were killed at the distance of a mile from the magazine.

On the forenoon of the 13th, the division of Lieut.-General Sir David Baird marched into the position; General Manningham's brigade forming on the right

of General Leith's, Lord William Bentinck on his right, and the Guards in reserve.

It was not until the 14th that the bridge of El Burgo was sufficiently repaired to admit of the enemy passing the river. The moment it was so, Marshal Soult pushed a considerable body of infantry and cavalry across. On the 15th, he ascended the range of heights directly above the northern branch of the Mero, and on which the ruined magazine was situated. To cover this movement, and protect the right flank of his columns, three pieces of cannon and a howitzer were advanced to the angle of the road above the village of Palavio Abaxo; these soon after opened upon the left of the British line, but without producing any effect. The whole ridge was soon covered with French troops.

The weather was clear and beautiful, every movement of the enemy being discernible from the high ground. During the course of the day the piquets were often slightly engaged, and towards evening a more serious affair was occasioned by the zeal of Colonel Mackenzie of the 5th regiment, who was killed in attempting to cut off two guns considerably advanced, and annoying the troops to the left of the position. The assembling of the French army on its bold and commanding ground had scarcely been

completed, when the fleet destined to convey the British from the shores of Spain made its appearance. The line-of-battle ships and transports were seen gliding along the coast towards the harbour of Coruña; but it was too late to commence an action, and darkness overspread the British force, without any attempt being made by the enemy to render unavailing the means of removal it now possessed.

At daybreak on the 16th the enemy's drums beat to arms, but no firing at the advanced posts denoted an immediate attack; when the heights became perfectly visible, the enemy were discovered quiet, without any hostile formation. It was, however, an anxious period; a battle must in all probability take place. It was not to be expected that an uninterrupted embarkation would be permitted; and situated as we were, one half-hour was a sufficient space of time to bring 40,000 men into close and deadly conflict.

Sir John Moore was early in the midst of the troops, and from the rocky eminence in front of General Hill's brigade, closely examined the whole range of the enemy's position. Contrary to all calculation, the early part of the day was passed without any offensive movement taking place. The commander of the forces, wearied of looking out for an

attack, which did not seem intended, rode to the town, to give his final instructions for the embarkation, which was rapidly proceeding in the harbour; all the civilians of the army, the sick, the wounded, the dismounted cavalry, and most of the cannon, had been conveyed to the shipping; the infantry, and a small force of artillery alone, remained upon Spanish ground.

The inactivity of the French army on the morning of the 16th appeared inexplicable, more particularly as a battery had been formed during the night, for the evident purpose of supporting an attack. Had it been placed merely to fire upon the encampment of the troops, it would of course have commenced at daylight; instead of which, during the forenoon not a single discharge issued from it. This was the more unaccountable, that in a very few hours darkness would prevail, only to be dispelled when every British soldier was beyond its reach. The battery, situated on a rocky height to the left of the French position, was armed with eleven pieces of cannon of large calibre; it domineered and swept the whole valley below.

At last the anxiously expected moment arrived; the enemy got under arms along his whole line; his columns were speedily formed; and about two o'clock

he descended into the valley, threatening the centre and left, while a serious attack on the right had the twofold object of turning or forcing back the weakest point of the British position. Artillery, placed along the whole ridge on which the enemy had stood, now opened on the British line. He had forced back the advanced posts, and Sir David Baird's division received that of General Mermet, which had poured like a torrent down upon the village of Elvina. Fortunately Sir John Moore had left Coruña, and was on horseback when the report of an immediate attack reached him; he arrived on the field at this critical moment. The scene now became one of the utmost animation. When the battle commenced, being in the lowest part of the ravine, it was completely filled with smoke. Above, on either side of the valley, was to be seen the hostile array, spectators of the contest. The sun shone bright, glittering arms bristled the steep declivity; the rolling fire of artillery and musketry was constant, loud, and uninterrupted; the centre became warmly engaged. It appeared that the work of death was extending to the left. The commanding situation of the enemy's cannon was severely felt. Nothing checked their rapid fire. Immovable, they poured from the heights showers of balls; they had no opposed bat-

teries to silence, no position to alter. Unassailed, and in security, their conductors had alone to consider the selection of those points, where, by a judicious direction, the fire might be most effective. Lord William Bentinck's brigade had from the first to resist an attack, made with all the spirit, the rapidity, and violence, natural to French troops. It had not only to maintain its ground, but to counteract the effect of a flank movement, which was executed, but ill supported, on the part of the enemy. The village of Elvina, of no importance to the security of the British position, but, being directly in the line of advance adopted by the left column of the enemy, became the seat of violent contest, terminating in its possession by the 50th regiment.

It was in the act of directing and encouraging the regiments of this brigade that the commander of the forces was mortally wounded. In the midst of a fire of musketry of the hottest description, he was also exposed to the effects of the great battery, directly over, and pointed at, this part of the field. A ball struck him from his horse, inflicting a wound of so dreadful a nature, that it is matter of surprise vitality could survive the instantaneous consequences of such tremendous injury. Thus fell, supporting

the honour of his country, this truly excellent and gallant soldier!

It is neither my intention nor my wish to enter into the controversial opinions so often delivered upon the conduct of his last campaign, farther than to state a firm conviction that his talents, his energies, or his motives, are far above the reach of calumny, more particularly when clothed in all the grovelling and subservient infamy of party purpose.

The fall of Sir John Moore placed General Hope in command of the army, the battle proceeding with unabated fury. The Guards were brought up to support Lord William Bentinck; General Paget, with the Reserve, turned the left flank of the enemy. General Fraser, still more to the right, and nearer Coruña, had not yet been engaged, nor had any part of General Hope's division. The enemy's column above Palavio remained stationary, but that under General Merle vigorously attacked the British centre, without, however, succeeding in making any impression.

After the left of General Manningham's brigade had been for some time engaged, General Leith was ordered to advance one of his battalions to relieve the 81st regiment, which had not only suffered severely, but nearly exhausted its ammunition. He marched down the 59th, taking up the ground under a very

heavy fire of musketry, which wounded Colonel Fane, and six other officers. A successful charge with the bayonet put a period to these volleys in our immediate front. It was now nearly dark; the firing on the right had ceased; in all directions it appeared to die away, when a warm tiraillade issued from the village of Palavio. Colonel Nichols, with the 14th regiment, had been sent to drive the enemy from thence; this he accomplished without difficulty, and in doing so, terminated the battle. The British position was unshaken. General Paget, by a judicious movement, had endangered that of the enemy; darkness alone prevented the complete déroute of the French army. Cut off from the St Jago road by the advance of the reserve, having that of Betanzos on which alone to retreat, with the difficulty of passing his army, in a state of confusion, across the superficially repaired bridge at Burgo, the Duke of Dalmatia might have been totally routed, could the advantage gained have been followed up immediately after the battle. It was a fortunate circumstance for his army that he deferred the attack to so late an hour; for, had light permitted, two British divisions of fresh troops would have poured upon his left, where the broken and defeated division of General Mermet would, without difficulty, have been forced

back upon the centre, also defeated. Only one of the French infantry columns remained unengaged; the numerous and fine division of General Hope, by rapidly advancing through Palavio towards El Burgo, would have completed the confusion, and might have prevented the passage of the Mero by the enemy. During this supposed state of affairs, the corps of Sir David Baird, of which some regiments had been but slightly engaged, could have remained on the ground where the battle was fought, and have kept up the communication with Coruña.

At the close of this action, there was not the same exhilarating feeling, the same excitement, that usually attends a victory. No pursuit, no trophies, nor any prisoners, at once to attest the services and the fortune of the army. The situation of the soldiers, and their various occupations, were the same as on the preceding night, while darkness prevented any traces of the action from being perceptible. A stillness prevailed for hours. The repose of the camp was only interrupted by the formation of the troops at midnight, when the whole, with the exception of the piquets, marched towards the harbour.

The enemy, unconscious of the departure of the army, continued immovable until daybreak, when the deserted position became visible. He then cross-

ed the line of what had been the British ground, and, without delay, formed a battery upon the northern point of that range of heights where General Hope's division had been encamped, these, extending past the village of Airis, slope gradually towards the San Diego point, at the southern extremity of the harbour. Before this battery opened its fire, most of the infantry were embarked, while distance from the shipping rendered its effects little dangerous. The only chance of serious accident was produced by the precipitation of some masters of transports, who, unaccustomed to such salutations, showed the greatest anxiety to get as speedily as possible beyond their reach; cables were cut, sails set, and confusion evident on board many of the merchantmen. The line-of-battle ships remained steady at their anchorage, the crews regardless of the balls passing over their decks or through the rigging. At last, the Norge, of 74 guns, lying nearest to the San Diego point, opened her battery, as if to convince the enemy it was fortunate for him that such a space intervened.

At this time, either four or five transports were aground: others had run foul of, and disabled, each other. One struck on the rocks near to the citadel, and almost immediately upset; the troops were, by great exertion, removed. Gradually the other vessels sail-

ed, the harbour became less crowded, the wind was favourable, the arrangements of the navy were admirable, and the departure of the armament from the shores of Spain, and from a land-locked harbour, took place without the loss of many lives; the only consequences resulting from the enemy's efforts to annoy being the destruction of the few transports wrecked in the harbour, and burnt by the British navy.

Soon after daylight on the 17th, General Leith's brigade was conveyed to the shipping; the boats of the men of war rapidly performed this service. The indefatigable officers of the navy carried on the embarkation with all the celerity resulting from discipline. The consequence was, that the service was far advanced before the French battery opened. It might otherwise have done considerable execution against boats crowded with men, and covering the whole surface of the water.

When passing the citadel of Coruña, on our way to the Zealous of seventy-four guns, we perceived in the nearest bastion Colonel Graham, and one other officer, superintending a ceremony which we could not doubt was the interment of the brave Commander of the forces. There was something unusually melancholy in this scene, and in the reflections it occa-

sioned. Nothing around seemed calculated to enliven it. The embarkation going forward had none of the exhilaration attending an operation naturally accompanied with so much of activity, life, and spirit; all seemed sombre and depressed; we were flying from the land, which was left in the undisturbed possession of troops vanquished on the preceding day, but now preparing to fire the last taunting discharges against soldiers whom fortune appeared to have frowned upon, even in victory.

Under these circumstances, were committed to the earth the remains of Sir John Moore—a man whose memory, friends, political writers, sycophants, and interested persons of all descriptions, have visited with injustice; one party holding up his last campaign as a matchless specimen of military tactic; another, for party purposes, endeavouring to affix to his conduct the errors committed by others,—all the misfortunes occasioned by adverse and uncontrollable circumstances; while some are prepared to maintain that he was betrayed by the Spaniards, was unsupported by the British government, and left to the resources of his own mind, which alone saved the army he commanded. The character of Sir John Moore is fixed upon a less perishable basis. It will live in history, armed with all the advantages to be

derived from disinterested testimony impartially given,—founded on facts and rational conclusions, not subjected to the erring opinions either of his contemporaries, or his companions in arms.

With reference to the much complained of conduct of the Spaniards, I have to remark, without dread of contradiction, that it was throughout distinguished by good faith, but, at the same time, rendered apparently equivocal from characteristic negligence, want of energy, and deficiency in the moral power to be alone derived from free institutions and an enlightened aristocracy.

A great portion of the difficulties occasioned by want of cordial assistance in procuring means of transport, are to be attributed to two causes; namely, ignorance in drawing forth the resources of a country, having yet to learn the method of compelling friends to assist, and at the same time consider themselves obliged, or the total absence of all arrangement by the authorities of that country. To expect that the Spanish peasantry were to rush from their houses, and supply the wants of the soldiers with the only provisions they possessed for their families—who might, in consequence, be left in the midst of the mountains, in the depth of winter, to starve—was imagining friendly feeling carried to an unna-

tural extent, and just as likely to happen, as it would have been, in the event of Napoleon having invaded Britain, that an English yeoman should have earnestly requested one of the soldiers of his own country to accept of the last morsel of bread he either possessed or had the means of obtaining for his children. The misfortunes of Sir John Moore's army were occasioned by inexperience in campaigning, by an ignorant commissariat, by bad roads, and dreadful weather, but never by the enemy.

The fleet having been collected off the harbour of Coruña on the morning of the 18th, the admiral made the signal for proceeding, when eleven line-of-battle ships, with the whole of the transports, steered for the shores of England.

CHAPTER II.

On the evening of the 2d July, 1809, the Champion frigate, Captain Henderson, anchored in the Tagus.

On my way to join the 29th regiment, I had embarked at Portsmouth with Captain Henderson, and accompanied him to Guernsey, where he took under convoy a fleet of transports, having on board the second battalions of the 34th, 39th, and 58th regiments, which he now saw in safety to their place of destination. It was late when we entered the river, and darkness prevented our enjoying a view of the beautiful scene. At daybreak, however, the city of Lisbon appeared in all the majesty of its picturesque and grand situation, while the stately river bore on its waters the ships of many nations. Close to where we anchored was the Barfleur, of 98 guns, bearing the flag of Admiral Berkeley, commanding in appearance, as in reality, every vessel that floated on the noble Tagus.

Line-of-battle ships, frigates, and smaller vessels of war, were discernible in every direction; the light, serviceable, and elegant rigging of the British navy contrasting with the slack, slovenly, or loaded cordage of all other description of shipping. The Russian men-of-war, detained at the period of the convention of Lisbon, dismasted, and moored above the town, presented the very beau ideal of hulks, while the large and handsome Portuguese frigates seemed in a state of preparation to carry from their native shores the persons to whom such emigration might become a matter of interest or necessity, in the event of a French army again occupying Lisbon. A large fleet of transports were at anchor; boats passed in all directions; vessels arriving or departing gave life and variety to a scene of the most animated, varied, and interesting description.

Lisbon, when seen from a distance, were it not for its situation and splendid river, is not in itself either grand or beautiful. Unlike other great cities, it derives no ornament from spires or domes, with the exception of that of the Estrella convent. The sameness in the appearance of its buildings is unbroken; but its varied situation, the inequality of the ground on which it stands, rising at once from the banks of the Tagus, its great extent, the light colour of the

stone with which it is built, the luxuriant appearance of the surrounding country—altogether give it an unequalled aspect of importance.

At this period, not a French soldier remained in Portugal. The second invasion of that country had been repelled, and the army of Sir Arthur Wellesley, after having driven the Duke of Dalmatia from Oporto across the frontier, had marched to commence offensive operations in Spanish Estrémadura. This was one of the bright and apparently prosperous epochs of the Peninsular war. The Spanish armies, defeated, but not discouraged, were numerous, improved in equipment, in some measure accustomed to active warfare; the British army had just terminated a short but brilliant campaign; the frontier fortresses were in possession of the allies; the *morale* of the French army had been shaken, while its numbers were diminished by the departure of the Imperial Guard, and other troops, for Germany, and the casualties attendant upon the unpopular and dangerous service on which it was employed. Ten British battalions had just arrived in the Tagus. The season was beautiful. Uninterrupted supplies poured in, at the same time, from England and America. The governments of the three countries seemed determined zealously and cordially to prosecute the war.

Napoleon was at Vienna; his brother Joseph acted as generalissimo of the French arms in Spain, Marshal Jourdan as his chief of the staff. The other Marshals employed in the Peninsula were without confidence in the military judgment of these persons; they were also jealous of each other,—a feeling to which the ablest of them was subjected. Such was the situation of affairs when Sir Arthur Wellesley established his head-quarters at Plasencia, on the 8th July, 1809.

The brigade of General Robert Crawford, composed of the 43d, 52d, and 95th regiments, left Lisbon to join the army. Three finer battalions never took the field; nor did their conduct upon any occasion ever belie the promise held out by their discipline, their robust healthy appearance, brilliant equipment, or distinguishedly military air.

From the moment of my arrival in Portugal, it naturally became an object of intense interest to join my regiment. Fortunately, I met at Lisbon Captain Tucker, of the 29th, who, impressed with similar feelings, agreed to adopt the most rapid mode of joining the army. We procured a post order to facilitate our progress, and embarked on the morning of the 14th, to row up the Tagus as far as Villada.

The right bank of the river is covered with olive-

trees, the ground rather elevated, and extremely picturesque. Villada, situated thirty-six miles from Lisbon, is a miserable village, and the country near to it flat and uninteresting. We there left the boat that had conveyed us from the capital, and commenced the journey by land. It was very late when we arrived at Santarem, where considerable difficulty occurred in procuring a lodging. As might naturally be expected, the inhabitants were not particularly anxious to disturb their families at one o'clock in the morning, for the purpose of welcoming perfect strangers, nor had they been by inspiration expecting an arrival, or ready to receive us. Probably all this was indicative of apathy, want of energy, and bad faith. Whatever *rational* motive may be assigned for the circumstance, we had to support the inconvenience, and were left to divine the reason, of such conduct, without being empowered to obtain redress. Having travelled through the rich and fertile valley of Golegaõ, we arrived next morning at Abrantes, one of the most beautifully situated towns in Portugal. Seated on an eminence overhanging the Tagus, it commands one of the most extensive and varied prospects to be imagined.

Abrantes is a town of considerable size. The convent of San Antonio, to the north, forms a striking

Drawn by Major Leith Hay

Engd by W.H. Lizars

DISTANT CASTELLO BRANCO.

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object, and is seen at a great distance. In the evening we again proceeded, gradually forsaking beautiful scenery for that of a more wild and dreary cast. Late at night, we reached Penascoso. From thence to Vendas Novas the road is extremely bad, the country continuing bleak and uncultivated. Having passed Perdigao, apparently the seat of poverty and misery, we arrived at Castello Branco. From thence to the frontier of Spain, no feature of particular interest attracts notice. The road passes through Idanha Nova and Salvaterra. The latter town, built upon very high ground, overlooks the river Erjas, forming the boundary of the kingdoms. Directly opposite to Salvaterra, also upon precipitous and elevated ground, stands the ruined castle of Penafiel, which appears to have been erected as a watch-tower for the Spanish border.

Zarza Mayor, seated in a valley, is in every respect contrasted to those towns we had lately seen in Portugal. It is built with regularity; the houses having an appearance of cleanliness and comfort. Coria, situated on the right bank of the river Alagon, is the seat of a bishoprick. It is surrounded by an ancient wall. The cathedral is the most diminutive, the least remarkable, building of its class, that I have ever seen in Spain.

The Alagon at Coria is a large and deep river, running through a flat country, beautifully wooded, and in many places in a high state of cultivation. A bridge of seven arches connects the town with the river, over which, however, there is no bridge. This gives rise to the Spanish saying that Coria is a town with "Puente sin Rio, y Rio sin Puente."

Late at night, after a day's journey of 14 Spanish leagues, we arrived at the city of Plasencia, a large town, in the centre of fertile plains, surrounded by mountains. Plasencia must ever be celebrated, from the circumstance of the Emperor Charles V. having selected it as the place of retirement, to which he dedicated the last years of his eventful and brilliant life; nor does it appear, that, in the whole extent of his Spanish territories, a more favourable spot could have been chosen, either with reference to climate, beauty of situation, or retirement of position. If ever there was a retired city, it is Plasencia. Its cathedral is a fine building, but not of first-rate magnificence.

The British army having advanced in the direction of Madrid, the sick alone remained at Plasencia. On the morning of the 20th we proceeded on our journey,—crossed the mountains in front of the town,—and descended into the valley of the Tietar,

from whence, having passed the village of Majadas, the route traverses immense forests of oak, frequently close to the banks of that romantic and beautiful river. We crossed the Tietar by the temporary bridge of Bazagona, arriving at midday near the Casa de las Llomas,—beautifully situated on an eminence in the centre of the forest,—the river winding through the extensive valley,—its banks covered with the noblest trees, luxuriant in foliage, affording shade, and coolness, and relief from the effects of a meridian sun. To the left, and in the distance, appeared the lofty range of mountain, separating Estremadura from the Province of Salamanca, surmounted by the Sierra de Gredos, with its summits clad in perpetual snow. A more splendid scene can scarcely be imagined. Nothing could be finer than the bold outline of the mountains, or more magnificent than the broad dark shadow, which, descending from their precipitous and rocky sides, overspread forest scenery on a scale that appeared interminable.

Oropesa we found unoccupied by the allied troops, but we there received information of a slight affair having taken place with the rear of the French army. It, therefore, became important to proceed with the least possible delay; and at two o'clock on the morning of the 23d, Captain Tucker and myself joined the

29th regiment in camp, near Talavera de la Reyna. Having dismissed the horses we had brought from Oropesa, Captain Gauntlet's tent afforded us shelter. Wrapped in our cloaks, we reposed until half past three, when the regiment got under arms.

The immediate vicinity of the enemy rendered it probable that the slightest forward movement would bring us in contact; nor did the orders of the preceding night in any respect remove the impression, that we were likely to be engaged. My travelling companion and myself, therefore, had a good chance of being in fire, before we had time to consider our relative situations in the regiment, where we were posted, or, in short, any thing except marching forward. There was a novelty and bustle in the situation, that gave it interest; nor had we time to receive those instructions which the etiquette of the service render necessary, until the parade was dismissed, which was soon after the result of its being ascertained that no immediate advance was contemplated.

Talavera, situated on the right bank of the Tagus, was at this period the head-quarters of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and General Cuesta. Above 50,000 British and Spanish troops occupied the neighbouring encampment. In front, on the high grounds to the

left of the river Alberche, was the corps d'armée of Marshal the Duke of Belluno.

The 29th regiment, brigaded with the 48th, and 1st battalion of detachments, under Brigadier-General Richard Stewart, formed part of the division of Major General Hill. This brigade, until the evening of the 27th, occupied the olive groves in front of the town, upon the immediate left of the road to Santa Olalla and Madrid.

The 23d passed without any important event occurring. The Allied army continued at Talavera; nor were the enemy's troops withdrawn from the position in front. It appears difficult to account for this delay in attacking so inferior a force; as regimental officers, we knew nothing with certainty, except what we personally witnessed, or read in the orders of the army; all else was rumour, exaggeration, surmise, or error. We were told that old General Cuesta declined fighting on Sunday. If he did assign that reason, it could only have been in bitterness and derision; but from whatever motive, the combined army permitted Marshal Victor to withdraw his corps uninjured, which he effected during the night. Early on the morning of the 24th the whole army moved to attack his position. It was, of course, found unoccupied. Sir

Arthur halted the troops under his orders, upon this fact being ascertained; but the Spanish general, with characteristic arrogance, singly dashed forward in pursuit. His columns passed the Alberche in rapid succession, as if they were alone to be obstructed by the iron barrier of the Pyrenees. General Hill's division retraced its steps, occupying the same ground on which it had previously been encamped. The state of the campaign to an uninformed spectator appeared extraordinary. The army, previously acting in concert, was now separated, the least effective part being in pursuit of the enemy. Part of the British force had crossed the Alberche, and was ten miles in advance of Talavera, while we remained perfectly quiet, enjoying demi-starvation upon the banks of the Tagus.

The 29th regiment, at this time commanded by Colonel White, had suffered on many occasions since its arrival in the Peninsula. Reduced in numbers, its colours were still defended by gallant and highly disciplined soldiers. A long-established and excellent regimental system was calculated to outlive the contingencies of frequently changed command, or the blanks occasioned by the fall of old and experienced soldiers. It would have demanded as much misapplied energy to have effectually broken

down its discipline and appearance, as it does the best or soundest judgment to eradicate the fatal effects of a long-standing bad system in battalions, even where the dregs, the recollections, and the consequences alone remain.

During the 25th we heard nothing of the Spanish army, but on the following day the report of artillery announced its return,—not unaccompanied. The cannonade was distant, but evidently becoming less so. Runaways and stragglers passed, to the rear; the weather was very fine; from the vicinity of the Santa Olalla road we derived great amusement: it was covered by a succession of groups, habited in various costumes.

On the morning of the 27th we learnt that part of General Cuesta's army had passed to the rear; while battalion after battalion formed a continuous line of march in the same direction. From amidst clouds of dust, disorderly chattering assemblages of half-clad, half-armed men, became occasionally visible; again, regiments marching in perfect order, cavalry, staff officers, bands of musicians, flocks of sheep, and bullocks; artillery, cars, carriages, and waggons, varied the animated, confused, and singular scene on which we gazed—forgetting for the time that all this was intimately connected with our very existence.

The Spanish army, notwithstanding this confusion, had not the appearance of being pressed by the enemy in its retreat; nor did the scene we now witnessed differ much from that it would have presented, under more favourable circumstances. The battalions marched in *their* best order; but with all this qualification, it was still a Spanish army,—ill commanded, ill appointed, moderately disciplined, and in most respects inefficient. In the line of march I perceived the Villaviciosa hussars, and accosted one of the soldiers who had accompanied General Leith during the campaign of 1808. He informed me of the Baron Almendarez having been wounded, and taken in the affair of Santa Olalla on the preceding day.

After the Spanish army had ceased to march past us, we returned to the quiet of the olive grove. Cannon and musketry were heard at intervals, but no order to move had yet arrived. Several officers of the 29th were assembled, when the Spanish General O'Donahue rode up from the direction of the Alberche. He appeared in a state of considerable excitement, stating we probably were not aware of the enemy having crossed the river, and that he would be upon us without delay. This information was received in a manner little according with his own apparent feelings on the occasion. We merely

thanked him, adding, that when it was necessary to get under arms, orders to that effect would of course be communicated. Another hour elapsed,—when the firing became so close and constant, that we began to consider it extraordinary that orders were not received. At last, however, the brigade got under arms, and marched to the left, passing both Spanish and British troops in line, who already occupied the position defended by them on the following day. As we moved left in front, the 29th, being the senior regiment, was in rear of the column,—the 48th leading. In this formation we advanced about half way between the town of Talavera, and the eminence then unoccupied, but which was evidently, from its locality and importance, destined to become the left, as also the strongest part of the position.

The brigade halted for a short time near to the division of Brigadier-General Alexander Campbell, in rear of an unfinished Spanish redoubt. The evening was far advanced when we again moved towards the hill. The firing, as we pressed forward, appeared heavy and incessant in the direction of the Alberche. Regiments of General M'Kenzie's division, retiring, passed us diagonally, falling into the line. It was now nearly dark. We were approaching the base of the hill, when a sharp fire issued from the leading

regiment, which, although assailed in its progress, continued to advance.

The 29th was formed in column of companies, at quarter distance. The 48th and battalion of detachments met with a formidable resistance, and were driven back at this critical moment, upon which the safety of the army depended. The 29th was ordered to advance at double quick time. The leading company crowned the summit previously to receiving the enemy's fire. A considerable body of French were now in possession of the height. Their numbers rapidly increasing, the drums beat the pas de charge; while at intervals voices were heard, some calling out they were the German Legion, others not to fire. It was so dark that the blaze of musketry alone displayed the forms of the assailants. The leading company of the 29th poured in a volley when close to the bayonets of the enemy. The glorious cheer of British infantry accompanied the charge, which succeeded. The rest of the regiment arrived in quick succession, forming on the summit a close column, which speedily drove every thing before it. The enemy was pushed down the hill, abandoning the level ground on its top, thickly strewed with dead bodies or wounded men. No second attempt was for some time made to carry this most important point. The

29th remained in possession of the ground, lying on their arms in the midst of fallen enemies. The furred schakos of a dead French oldier became my pillow for the night.

The heavy fire of musketry, the darkness, the apparently obstinate nature of the dispute for the possession of the hill, the uncertainty of the result, all occasioned great anxiety at head-quarters. Sir Arthur Wellesley himself rode to the spot, to which he immediately ordered up artillery; and the early part of the night was employed in drawing cannon to the height. After they had been placed in battery, a stillness for some time prevailed. About midnight this was suddenly interrupted, by firing towards Talavera;—not the straggling, desultory, yet distinct reports of light troops, but a roll of musketry that illuminated the whole extent of the Spanish line. It was one discharge; but of such a nature that I have never heard it equalled. It appeared not to be returned, nor was it repeated. All again became silent. A false alarm had occasioned this tremendous volley; but we were too distant to ascertain what had produced the violent irruption, or how many of our allies had thrown away their arms, and fled, after having delivered a fire sufficiently formidable to have shaken the best and bravest troops.

For hours nothing seemed to interfere with the stillness of the night, until the rattling of gun carriages in our front bespoke preparation for renewed hostility at daybreak. It was evident from the sound that cannon were placing in position, at no great distance, and immediately opposite to the height we occupied. Whether occasioned by the noise of this operation,—from officers reconnoitring, or cavalry patrols advancing near to our posts, is uncertain, some straggling shots were fired, occasioning a momentary alerte; but no enemy appearing, the cause of alarm was speedily explained and forgotten.

Just before daybreak was an anxious moment; and when the first glimmering light appeared, the attention of all was naturally riveted upon the enemy's position, to ascertain what troops were opposed,—where his cannon were placed, and to what extent we were to be assailed. Twenty-two pieces of artillery had their mouths directed towards us. They were posted upon elevated ground, but by no means of equal height to that on which we stood, having, however, the whole face and summit of the hill well within range. To the right of the French cannon were perceived columns of infantry. A renewed battle for the hill became certain.

The 29th regiment, having carried it on the pre-

vious night, were not removed from its summit during the whole course of the subsequent operations, except in pursuit of the enemy. The formation of the brigade became consequently altered, that regiment being on the extreme left of the whole line of British infantry, while the battalion of detachments, and the 48th, were formed on the slope extending to the right, and gradually losing itself in the olive groves that covered two-thirds of the position.

When it became perfectly light, a signal gun put the enemy's columns in motion, the whole of his artillery opening almost immediately after. The incessant and violent description of cannonade prevented the British infantry from interrupting the progress of the French columns; nor did they sustain any loss whatever in the early part of their advance, coming on with a resolute and rapid pace. The 29th were ordered to lie down a short distance behind the brow of the hill, which the soldiers did with arms in their hands, ready to start up at a moment's warning. By this judicious arrangement, the regiment suffered little from the cannonade, although the enemy's practice appeared excellent, every shot either striking the ground immediately in front, or passing close over our heads.

There is at all times something grand, imposing,

and terrific, in the sound of a cannonade. Here we had the astounding noise, with time to contemplate what was passing over us, without the attention being abstracted by great personal danger, or immediate effort at extrication. The effect was consequently very impressive. An old Scotch sergeant, crouching close to me, permitted his head to attain a very slight elevation, and, with a groan, said,—"Good God, sir, this is dreadfu'!" Without discussing the merits of our situation, I merely advised him to keep down his head,—a hint instantly adopted, without any apparent reluctance, on his part, and, at the close of the affair, I was happy to find it was still upon his shoulders. At this period we had the battle entirely to ourselves, no other part of the army being engaged.

When the French columns had mounted the ascent, and were so near as to become endangered from the fire of their own artillery, a scene of great animation was exhibited. The summit, which had appeared deserted, now supported a regular line of infantry. Near the colours of the 29th stood Sir Arthur Wellesley, directing and animating the troops.

General Ruffin had nearly surmounted all the difficulties of the ground, when a fire burst forth that checked his advance. His troops wavered. Sir Arthur ordered a charge. With one tremendous shout,

the right wing of the 29th, and entire battalion of the 48th, rushed like a torrent down, bayoneting and sweeping back the enemy to the brink of an insignificant muddy stream, nearly equidistant in the ravine which separated the two armies. In the pursuit, all order was speedily lost. The men advanced in small parties, destroying those of the enemy who had not ensured their safety by flight. At this moment, when the whole valley was filled with troops, in all the confusion attending the eagerness of pursuit, a column of French infantry appeared close upon our right flank, facing towards the irregular mass. It became necessary to collect the pursuers, to form a front, and to charge these fresh assailants. This was, by great exertion, accomplished. Broken as we were, an irresistible impetus had been given, and the enemy's column followed the example of those who had mounted the hill at the pas de charge. So completely were these attacks repelled, that the British infantry were quietly collected in the ravine, and marched back to the height, without being seriously assailed. The enemy now threw out light troops in front of his defeated 1st corps. Artillery continued to fire at intervals; but for a time nothing like serious fighting succeeded the Duke of Belluno's failure in the morning.

To the left of the British position at Talavera is a flat, extending in breadth about a mile, bounded to the north by a ridge of high rocky mountains, terminating the prospect. Upon these heights the enemy placed a number of light troops, which were, during the day, effectually kept in check by a division of General Cuesta's army. The tiraillade was incessant, probably little destructive; but it had the desired effect, no jealousy being created by the progress of the war in that quarter. In this valley to our left, but somewhat in rear of the infantry, was placed General Anson's brigade of light cavalry, consisting of the 1st hussars of the German Legion, and 23d dragoons. These regiments were in line, dismounted. In rear of them, also in line, was the heavy brigade of General Fane; and in his rear the Duke of Alburquerque, with the Spanish cavalry.

After the repulse of the 1st corps, great indecision seemed to prevail in the enemy's army. His columns remained for hours immovable. During this cessation of hostilities, the troops of General Hill's division descended in parties to the stream in our front, for the purpose of procuring water, which was only obtained in small quantities, of a description that, under other circumstances, would have produced loathing; but the excessive heat of the weather, added to

exertion, occasioned a burning thirst, demanding to be quenched by any possible means. This temporary calm was only the prelude to more serious conflict. Early in the afternoon, appearances again indicated renewed attack on the part of the enemy. His whole line stood to their arms. Clouds of dust marked the advance of troops against the centre and right of the British position; while the 1st corps d'armée, supported by a large body of cavalry, formed for another effort to force the left.

To the right of where the French artillery had been placed in the night, and on a line with them, was a small building, behind which, and to its right, was formed General Villatte's division; higher up the valley, the remains of General Ruffin's; a third division supported General Villatte, and the whole plateau to the rear was covered with cavalry in extended order. Some Spanish artillery had arrived upon the height: plunging into the enemy's columns, their fire was incessant, and well directed. In the midst of our troops, these men fought their guns in a manner to excite the admiration of all present; proving that Spaniards only required the confidence given by example to conduct themselves in the face of an enemy with propriety.

The scene from the hill was now of a grand de-

scription. A fire of cannon and musketry to the whole extent of the British centre and left, was of the most serious description. To those who, elevated as we were, saw every movement, this was the most anxious moment of the whole battle. Heavy columns of French infantry seemed following in succession to press upon the weakest part of the line; nor did it appear within the reach of probability that the centre could successfully resist this overwhelming force.

General Alexander Campbell, upon the extreme right of the British force, was flanked by a redoubt which strengthened his position, and became of essential importance. His troops were never shaken; they fought with the greatest gallantry, drove back General Sebastiani, and took ten pieces of cannon. Thus far the battle had proceeded without the slightest reverse.

General Sherbrooke was now vigorously attacked. His division was assailed, both in front and on its left flank, by a fire of artillery; while columns of infantry rushed up to the bayonets of the British Guards. They were instantaneously borne back in confusion. In the heat of pursuit, the Guards, as is the case with troops in all parts of the world, in every similar situation, fell into disorder. Who

has ever seen an unbroken line preserved in following up a successful bayonet charge? As they advanced, the enemy's artillery fire became, of course, closer and more deadly. Fresh, and regularly formed troops, met the pursuers, and drove them back. If they were in confusion when advancing, this state of matters was not calculated to restore their formation. The Guards were driven across their former ground, and the line seemed pierced. The German Legion on their left also vigorously attacked, and, suffering severely from the cannonade, gave way. There was no reserve of infantry. One single file of Germans had stood between us and destruction. This had now disappeared. It was an awful moment; promptitude, and the inertness of the Duke of Belluno, alone saved the army.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, who, from the height, surveyed the progress of the battle, directed the 29th to go down; and the regiment was in the act of moving, when, considering probably its weakness in numbers, he ordered the 48th to proceed, and check the enemy's progress in the centre. That excellent regiment marched with the utmost rapidity, and compelled the enemy to desist from the pursuit. The Guards rallied, cheering their readiness to again press

forward, the Germans recovered their formation, and the battle was restored.

During this great struggle, the troops upon the hill had remained comparatively disengaged; a fire of artillery and light troops, producing slight effect, alone disturbing the regiment, and the numerous staff, upon its summit. The favourable termination of the battle in the centre had created a great excitement. The cheer, which had been re-echoed from the height, had scarcely died away, when a scene of another character was in preparation, again to call forth its invigorating influence.

The movements of the divisions Ruffin and Villatte had, during the contest just described, been vacillating and uncertain. Formed to all appearance determined again to attack the height, they had even advanced some distance towards its base. Their light troops skirmished closely and seriously; but nothing like the attack of the morning was again attempted. Still the right of the French army had a very imposing appearance. In columns of attack, and supported by numerous cavalry, a serious effort was every moment to be expected. Sir Arthur Wellesley crossed with rapid step from the right of the 29th to the part of the hill looking directly down upon General Anson's brigade of cavalry, which

mounted on the instant. It was immediately known that a charge would take place.

The ground upon which this brigade was in line is perfectly level; nor did any visible obstruction appear between it and the columns opposed. The grass was long, dry, and waving, concealing the fatal chasm that intervened. One of General Villatte's columns stood at some distance to the right of the building formerly mentioned. These troops were directly in front of the 23d dragoons. Another was formed rather to the rear, and more in front of the German hussars, on the left of the line. Such were the immediate objects of the charge.

For some time the brigade advanced at a rapid pace, without receiving any obstruction from the enemy's fire. The line cheered. It was answered from the hill with the greatest enthusiasm; never was any thing more exhilarating or more beautiful than the commencement of this advance. Several lengths in front, mounted on a grey horse, consequently very conspicuous, rode Colonel Elley. Thus placed, he, of course, first arrived at the brink of a ravine, which, varying in width, extended along the whole front of the line. Going half speed at the time, no alternative was left him. To have checked his horse and given timely warning became impos-

sible. With some difficulty he cleared it at a bound, and on gaining the opposite bank, endeavoured by gesture to warn the 23d of the dangerous ground they had to pass; but advancing with such velocity, the line was on the verge of the stream before his signs could be either understood or attended to. Under any circumstances this must have been a serious occurrence in a cavalry charge; but when it is considered that four or five hundred dragoons were assailing two divisions of infantry unbroken, and fully prepared for the onset, to have persevered at all was highly honourable to the regiment.

At this moment the enemy, formed in squares, opened his tremendous fire. A change immediately took place. Horses rolled on the earth; others were seen flying back dragging their unhorsed riders with them; the German hussars coolly reined up; the line of the 23d was broken. Still the regiment galloped forward. The confusion was increased; but no hesitation took place in the individuals of this gallant corps. The survivors rushed forward with, if possible, accelerated pace, passing between the flank of the square, now one general blaze of fire, and the building on its left.

Colonel Elley and Major Frederick Ponsonby—officers not to be easily checked—headed the part of

the regiment that had penetrated thus far; and, as if enraged at not having been enabled to make a sabre stroke at the infantry, rode forward against the cavalry drawn up in line to the rear. These chasseurs, either impressed with the extraordinary nature of the attack, or from some inexplicable cause, gave way before these broken, but gallant horsemen.

The situation of the 23d was now very critical. To return directly from whence the regiment had advanced, was impracticable. By doing so, the surviving soldiers must have again sustained a close and deadly fire from the French squares; and although the chasseurs had given way, another line of cavalry was in their front. To their right was the whole French army; to their left, and in rear of the enemy's infantry, was the only possible line of escape. This was adopted. In small parties, or singly, they again regained the valley, re-forming in rear of General Fane's brigade, the advance of which had been countermanded, after the unsuccessful result of the first charge was ascertained. Fortunately for the first corps d'armée, no further attempt was made to carry the hill. The same repulse would probably again have attended the effort, while 6000 cavalry were in the immediate vicinity, and could have instantaneously fallen upon the broken ranks.

Eighty pieces of French cannon now thundered along the extent of the line; and as the infantry attacks failed, the circumstance appeared but to give renewed vigour to the cannonade, which was incessant and destructive. Towards evening the long grass in the valley to our left, and in front of the height, took fire; burning with great violence, and extending with rapidity. The whole surface of the flat, over which the 23d had advanced, and the face of the hill up which General Ruffin's division attacked in the morning, became one close continuous mass of fire and smoke. The French artillery and voltigeurs still fired upon the height; nor had the infantry columns of the Duke of Belluno been withdrawn. It being of importance to ascertain that no more serious attack was imperceptibly permitted to take place, I was directed by Colonel Bathurst, the military secretary, to station myself near the cannon on the summit, and report the enemy's motions. These guns were now silent, and the 29th regiment a short distance to their rear removed from the effects of the enemy's fire.

The grass being excessively dry, burnt with astonishing rapidity,—the whole face of the country over which the conflagration extended, soon forming one black scorched mass, studded with bodies

of the dead or wounded. After serious attack had ceased on all parts of the line, and even the light troops had become more distant, Sir Arthur Wellesley was seated, with some officers of his staff, upon the southeastern ridge of the hill, observing the retiring columns of the enemy, when a musket ball struck him on the breast with sufficient force to give a severe and painful blow, without penetrating. It would be idle to descant upon the destinies depending on the degree of impetus possessed by this small portion of lead!

Worn down with long exertion and fatigue,—exhausted from want of food,—oppressed by heat,—tired by the duration of a struggle that appeared interminable,—the approach of night was not unwelcome. The enemy had been repulsed at all points, but no pursuit to any extent had been attempted; and when darkness closed upon the armies, it was uncertain that the following day would not produce a renewed effort on the part of the enemy. The fire of cannon had not yet ceased, nor was it until the close of twilight, that the dull sluggish sound of artillery when heard alone at intervals, or at a distance, seemed to knell the close of this sanguinary but most interesting battle.

The 29th regiment, reduced by the fall of one hun-

dred and eighty-six officers and soldiers, bivouac'd for the night on the same spot as the preceding.—Great firmness to grapple with responsibility, self-possession to rise above adverse circumstances, a vigorous mind to decide promptly and correctly, brave troops, and the good fortune of being indecisively and injudiciously opposed, brought Sir Arthur Wellesley through the battle of Talavera.

No generals, possessed of the experience and character of Marshals Jourdan and Victor, ever committed more errors in one day; it would be difficult to point out any portion of the plan adopted by them that was not faulty and ill-conceived. What makes this more conspicuous and more remarkable is, that it was not one erroneous principle of tactics, but a succession, and that after events had proved the hopeless success of their primary arrangements, when full time was given to correct the disposition of their force early, and to make a simultaneous and irresistible attack.

Having failed in obtaining possession of the hill on the night of the 27th, Marshal Victor, who is understood to have known the ground perfectly, might have passed the whole of his corps d'armée through the valley to the left of the British without obstruction; 30,000 men would still have been in

line in Sir Arthur Wellesley's front. Secondly, the isolated attack of the British left at daylight was ill-judged and unsupported; had cavalry then been in the valley, the enemy's column, which, as it was, suffered severely, might have been annihilated.

If the French Marshals, instead of attacking the flanks of the British, had borne, with a large portion of their force, upon the centre, making demonstrations sufficient to occupy the other parts of the line, they must, in all probability, have succeeded; but it is an unanswerable reflection upon generals commanding 50,000 troops, that they, having made a serious impression, permitted victory to be wrested from them by a single battalion, and that battalion detached from a point where five others, reduced in numbers, were threatened by a whole corps d'armée. All combination seemed at an end in the French army. In the morning, the Duke of Belluno was defeated, the other generals looking on; in the evening, General Sebastiani met with the same fate, Marshal Victor remaining immovable.

In passing this censure upon the conduct of the French Generals-in-Chief at Talavera, it is but just to bear testimony to the gallantry of the troops. Upon no occasion did the enemy's infantry ever

assail ours with more determined resolution, more impetuosity, or with more undoubted bravery.

A cold damp night succeeded to this excessively warm and fatiguing day. The troops remained in position without covering of any description, and without food. Never did a British army attach less importance to such privations. Events had succeeded each other so rapidly, the whole scene was so impressive, that all else appeared forgotten; for the last thirty-six hours, a morsel of bread, with some pure water, would have been considered luxurious fare upon the hill at Talavera.

At daybreak, it became evident that the main body of the enemy had retired from view. A corps, estimated at 10,000 men, occupied the heights of Salinas, on the left bank of the Alberche; but no other part of the enemy's army was in any direction discernible. It was no longer necessary to detain the troops in position. At nine o'clock, the 29th regiment marched from the height, to encamp in the olive-grove at its base. There was something noble in the waving colours of the British regiments, as they slowly descended from that eminence where, two days previously, they had been planted, not to be shaken by any assault, however firmly made, and which they

now left covered with dead bodies, broken arms, shattered tumbrils, and the fragments of shells. As we descended, every step displayed objects proving the severity of the conflict which had taken place on the particular spot; but nowhere was there appearance of more terrific execution than on the ground of the German legion; there, both artillery and musketry appeared to have revelled in slaughter.

The morning after the action, General Robert Crauford's brigade arrived, and, passing over the field of battle, took the outpost duty upon the Alberche. The town of Talavera became crowded with wounded, many of whom were in a wretched state. By the activity and energy of Mr Guthrie, surgeon to the regiment, those of the 29th were comparatively well lodged, his hospitals presenting an appearance of great regularity and arrangement. Captain Gauntlet, who had, upon the morning of the 28th, been wounded on the right temple by a grape shot, lingered until the 30th, when he expired. The regiment accompanied his remains to the height where he fell. The small portion of the Spanish army that were engaged on the 28th, behaved very gallantly, particularly the cavalry regiment Del Rey, which charged, and was most useful, after General Alexander Campbell had repulsed the attack of the fourth

corps; but most of General Cuesta's force remained inactive spectators during the course of the battle. The Duke of Alburquerque had no opportunity of engaging the great body of cavalry under his immediate orders; but its presence in the valley was of the utmost importance, and must have had considerable influence on the movements of the Duke of Belluno.

The inactivity of General Venegas, who was, during these operations, in the vicinity of Toledo, with twenty-five thousand men, is quite inexplicable. Great results must have been produced by a decisive and prompt co-operation on his part. He might have converted the repulse of Talaverà into a substantial victory; as it was, no military situation can well be conceived more dangerous or more perplexing than that of the British general, even after the successful issue of the battle.

He was acting in concert with General Cuesta, an obstinate, jealous, imbecile old man, at the head of an army on which no great dependence could be placed. In his front were the defeated but unbroken corps of Marshal Victor, Generals Sebastiani and Dessolles. General Venegas either could not, or would not, co-operate. In his rear, in possession of the lines of communication, north of the Tagus, were Marshals the Dukes of Dalmatia, Elchingen,

and Treviso, cutting off his retreat by Plasencia, commanding the passage of the Tagus at Almaraz, Ponte Cardenal, and Alcantara, and rapidly advancing upon Oropeza. Added to these circumstances, his army was difficulted in obtaining supplies. Animals for transporting the 5000 sick and wounded, that filled the hospitals of Talavera, were not to be procured.

Had the Spanish armies been composed of troops equal to the French in discipline or the knowledge of war, commanded by men cordial in their alliance, and ready to second the views of the British general, an immediate advance upon Madrid, and junction with Venegas, might have been the most judicious measure to have adopted under the extremely difficult circumstances. As it was, nothing but madness could have dictated such a movement. Remaining at Talavera was also out of the question: to have done so would have been playing the enemy's game to the fullest extent.

Taking the chance of a large portion of the French army, which had fought the battle of the 28th, being occupied by General Venegas, and Sir Robert Wilson's corps,—that the remainder could not immediately return to Talavera,—that, if they did so, General Cuesta's army ought to be sufficient to keep

them in check,—was a sound view of the first part of the plan adopted. To return by the Plasencia road, and give battle to the Duke of Dalmatia, with the whole of the British army, was the only possible method of saving its hospitals. On the morning of the 3d of August, therefore, having left General Cuesta at Talavera, Sir Arthur Wellesley marched his army to Oropeza. The British had scarcely disappeared from his sight, when the old Spanish general began to doubt the security of his quarters; nor were the enemy long in giving him reason to suppose that the sooner he approximated to his ally the better. The great force with which the Duke of Dalmatia was advancing, being now ascertained, must probably have prevented Sir Arthur following up his intention of giving him battle; but the arrival of the Spanish army in full retreat made an immediate and decided movement absolutely necessary.

There was no possible safe line of operation now left on the right bank of the Tagus. One passage across that river alone remained open,—that by the Puente del Arzobispo, over which, during the 4th, the army passed, encamping in the woods on the left bank. At daybreak, on the morning of the 5th, we marched in the direction of Mesa de Ibor, halting for the night in a ravine, distant six leagues from the Pu-

ente del Arzobispo. On the 6th, the army continued its route, passing over a rugged and precipitous road. At one part of the Sierra, and for a considerable distance, to drag the artillery up by the usual means became impossible. The infantry were put to the guns, who, with considerable difficulty and exertion, forced them along the mountain road. On this day's march, for the first time, were heard complaints from the soldiers on the subject of want of food. Toiling over these mountains, dragging the cannon, severely harassed by excessive heat, the men, conversing with each other, talked loudly of the hardships endured; but a soothing and encouraging expression was alone necessary to restore their good humour, even when assailed on the tenderest point.

General Robert Crauford's brigade had preceded the army in the direction of Almaraz, to watch the passage of the river at that important place. Fortunately the enemy had hitherto confined his movements to the right bank of the Tagus. Had he crossed part of his force at Almaraz previous to the arrival of the British, which was perfectly possible, the situation of Sir Arthur Wellesley must, of course, have become one of increased embarrassment; but the moment he arrived at Deleytosa the safety of his

army was beyond doubt: its retreat was no longer liable to obstruction. His situation at Talavera, upon the morning of the 3d of August, was one of incomparably greater danger than that of Sir John Moore at Sahagun; but, as has previously been stated, the merit of extrication must deservedly be given to his own great military talent, his firmness of determination, his clear insight into the real state of affairs, both with regard to his allies, his enemy, the country in which he was committed, or his own numerical means; but all this must have been unavailing had he been opposed by generals of great military talent. The battle of Talavera proved what pretension Marshal Victor had to that character; the Duke of Dalmatia was only great when acting under the immediate orders of Napoleon.

It is evident that, had it been practicable for Sir Arthur Wellesley at this period to form a correct estimate of the extent or nature of Spanish co-operation, or had he obtained information as to the real situation of Marshal Soult's army, the battle of Talavera ought never to have been fought. It is also certain, that the error thereby committed was in a great measure remedied by the judicious arrangements of the British general, resulting from the knowledge of facts acquired subsequent to the action;

and that he was, four days after the victory, placed in a more critical situation than if Marshal Victor had not again appeared upon the Alberche after the affair of Santa Olalla. Fifty thousand men, including above five thousand cavalry, with one hundred pieces of cannon, were in his rear. Nothing checked the return of the first corps, the King's Guards, or the division of General Dessolles. Thus far, to all appearance, the plan of the French marshals had succeeded; but they knew not how to carry into full effect their own designs; and their greater enemy escaped. Fortunately the genius of Napoleon was far distant!

On the 8th the British head-quarters were at Deleytosa, a small village, seated on an eminence, in the direct road to Truxillo. On the morning of the 9th, Spanish cavalry and infantry again appeared retiring upon the track of Sir Arthur Wellesley; the bridge of Arzobispo had been forced, and General Cuesta's army was in full retreat.

We were now approaching the cultivated plains of Estremadura, which, although already subjected to the withering effects of the Spanish and French armies that had traversed them for months in succession, during the early part of the season, still af-

forded a prospect of those supplies that the British had lately been perfectly uncertain of obtaining.

The long fatiguing marches which followed the retrograde movement from Arzobispo, were now discontinued. Those of the 8th and 10th were short, over a comparatively flat country, and easily accomplished. The evening of the 10th, we encamped on the right bank of the Rio del Monte, near to Jaraicejo. The following day, crossing that river, the troops took up an alignement on its opposite bank. The situation of this camp was picturesque in the highest degree. Considerably elevated above the river, the view in front was not obstructed by the numerous splendid trees that shaded its banks; the ground sloped steeply, but not ruggedly, down to the water, which was here, a broad, deep, but rather sluggish stream. To the rear of the encampment were extensive forests of cork, chestnut, or oak-trees; the road from Deleytosa to Truxillo intersecting the line of tents nearly at a right angle. On this beautiful spot we remained in perfect inactivity for some days. The Spanish army had disappeared from our front; nor did we hear any tidings of the enemy. Nothing could be more dull or monotonous than the camp at Jaraicejo.

On the 13th, accompanied by Captain Gell of the

29th, I rode to Truxillo. This excursion was made with an intention of purchasing provisions; but a desire, also, of varying the scene, and curiosity to visit the birth-place of Francisco Pizarro, formed additional inducements to wander.

Truxillo is a large town, commandingly situated on a height rising from a level of great extent. The view from it is extensive, grand, and varied. It appears the monarch of the plain. Upon the approach of the armies, its inhabitants had fled, but returned upon becoming acquainted with the fact that payment would in all cases be obtained from the British. This restored confidence, and founded a system of barter equally enriching to them, and useful to the army. Every thing was of course charged enormously. Wine was sold in profusion. The depositaries had nearly become emptied, but ingenuity made up for the insufficiency of the supply. The Spaniards, conceiving that their allies were persons who must have wine, and at the same time would not be particular as to the quality, diluted and mixed the originally poor produce of the grape of Estremadura in such a manner, composing so horrible a description of drink, that it is only extraordinary more fatal effects were not immediately produced by its deleterious qualities. As might na-

turally be expected, all parts of the camp sent forth its foragers, flocking to the emporium of Truxillo, where scenes of a ludicrous kind were constantly occurring. The stores were absolutely beset with applicants, while the struggle carried on to obtain early attention to individual demand, was extremely diverting, particularly to those whose wants had been already supplied. In the midst of this extraordinary market, all distinctions of situation vanished before the natural impulse of earnest endeavour to procure the necessaries of life. The quarter-master-sergeant, the regimental officer, the medical man, the soldier's wife, or the officer of the Guards, were alike employed in the inelegant and vulgar avocation of purchasing meat, vegetables, chocolate, groceries, or even bread!

In one part of the Plaza was to be observed the scion of aristocracy in the act of dispatching his servants after having completed the degrading service on which he had from necessity most unwillingly proceeded; in another, the more humble messenger of a subaltern's mess had just heaped upon his sinking quadruped the last deposit of his purchased store, the accompanying soldier almost lost in a forest of canteens, containing enough to poison a whole regiment

The anxious enquiries of those arriving, as to the situation where their wants could be supplied; the careless manner of the retiring groups, intent alone upon urging to accelerated speed the animals in their charge, and having obtained the object of their own visit, treating with characteristic churlishness the questions of unfortunates arriving to pass through the same ordeal of difficulty and imposition, added to the effect of this varied scene.

The house of the Pizarro family at Truxillo is spacious and handsome, presenting an ornamented façade, and having the appearance of a distinguished residence. In the ruined church of Truxillo is placed a monument to the memory of the celebrated conqueror of Peru. The building had been dismantled by the French troops, but the marble recording the name of the town's most distinguished citizen survived the sacrilegious devastation. The Duques de San Juan, also an Estremaduran family, have a residence in Truxillo.

It was late when we returned to the camp. Either from carelessness or accident, the woods had taken fire. Smoke, and distant light, for which we could assign no reason, met us, or struck upon our sight as we approached Jaraicejo; but it was not until within half a league of the encampment, that we

ascertained from whence these appearances proceeded. The forest was illuminated in all directions. The crackling of the branches, and the sheet of fire which enveloped the stems of the ilex or chestnut, had in the darkness a brilliant appearance. The trunks of these venerable trees blazed not, but, red with fire that appeared eating to their hearts, resembled innumerable pillars of light. To penetrate by the nearest tracks to the camp became impracticable; we therefore continued upon the main road, crossed the bridge, and regained the position of the 29th regiment. Fortunately the fire had not extended to the immediate neighbourhood of our camp, and the wind drove it in a different direction.

On the 19th of August, two divisions of the army broke up from Jaraicejo, marching to the rear. On the 20th, General Crauford arrived from Almaraz. The 21st at daybreak, General Hill's division quitted the banks of the Rio del Monte, encamping in the evening to the southward of the city of Truxillo.

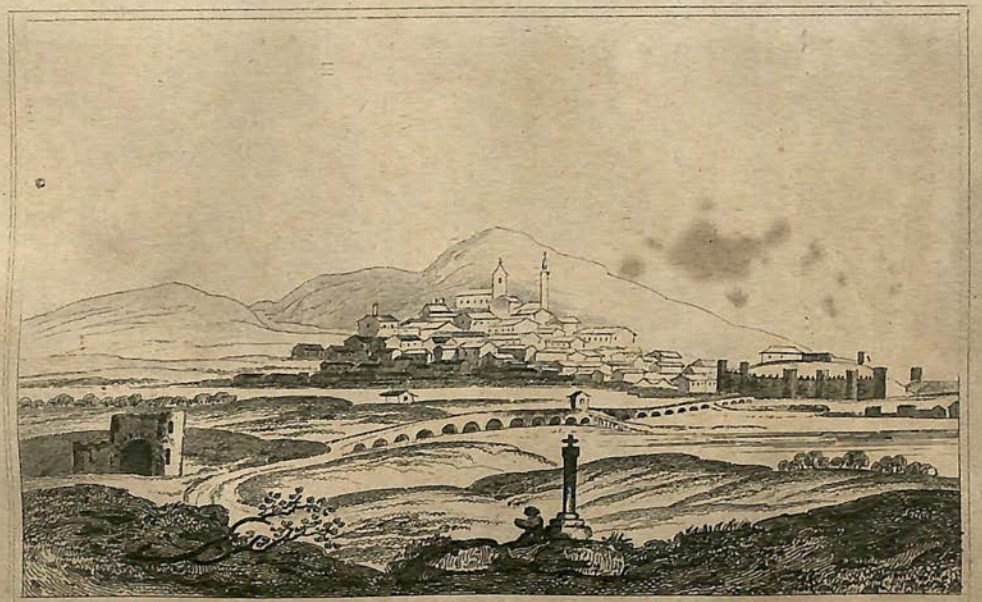
The 22d, we marched to Santa Crux de la Sierra —a beautifully situated village, at the foot of a mountain from whence it derives its name. The Sierra is covered to its summit with myrtles, vines, mulberry and fig-trees, presenting a rich and luxuriant landscape. Near to the town is a convent of Augustine

Friars. We were encamped in a wood about a mile in advance. During the forenoon, one of those accidents occurred, which in the track of armies are often erroneously attributed to design. The brushwood at the base of the mountain became kindled, the excessively dry state of the country soon spread the flame with resistless fury, taking a direction through the vineyards up the face of the Sierra. The unfortunate peasants were seen at intervals through the smoke, endeavouring to arrest the progress of the devastation; but their efforts were unavailing. This beautiful mountain garden soon became a scathed and blackened wilderness.

Having passed the night of the 23d near Miajadas, we marched to Medellin, encamping near to that town on the following day. Medellin is situated on the southern bank of the Guadiana, over which is a bridge of twenty arches. The town itself is uninteresting; but upon a height, rising immediately from the river, is a Moorish castle, seated upon a steep and rugged rock, like most other Spanish castles, deriving its importance and effect more from the bold altitude on which it stands, than either from its extent or grandeur of architecture. The surrounding country is unadorned by wood, bleak, and uncultivated. A plain to the south of the town bore

numerous marks of having been a field of battle; nor had the four intervening months served to efface the evidences of defeat and slaughter. Fragments of uniforms, caps, bones, dead horses, cartridges, exploded shells, strewed the ground in every direction.

During a day of excessive heat the division marched from Medellin to Merida. Merida, the Emerita Augusta of the Romans, and capital of ancient Lusitania, is situated on the right bank of the Guadiana, over which is a bridge of fifty-four arches, erected by the Emperor Trajan. The town is encircled by a wall, bearing the appearance of great antiquity. Near the river it is of considerable altitude, intersected by square towers; but in many places dilapidated, and fast mouldering to decay. The ruins of the Roman aqueduct are very fine, strongly contrasting with the inferiority of a modern building erected for the same purpose. Many of the ornamental and sculptured parts of the Temple of Mars are in preservation. Of a circular form, and having been of considerable magnitude, the foundation of the Temple of Minerva alone remains. Nothing is left to prove its architectural merits. In the destruction of this edifice, it is probable time has been aided by the barbarism of mankind; it is by far the



Drawn by Major Leith Hay *Engd by W.H. Lizars*

MERIDA.

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most dilapidated of the Roman buildings of which any trace exists at Merida.

An arch, called by the Spaniards, the "Arco de St Jago," is worthy of observation, from its magnitude, its beauty of form, and its appearance of stability after the lapse of so many years. It bears no inscription by which the date of its erection can now be ascertained; but from the style of the building, it appears of the same era as the bridge—owing its existence to the man who of all others has left to Spain the noblest monuments of his grandeur, his taste, and munificence.

On an eminence in the town are seated the ruins of the Temple of Diana: they are to be seen from the bridge. The pillars, formed of freestone, are, of course, more defaced than the marble relics of the same age. The western colonnade is the most perfect; there the splendid Corinthian capitals are still extant, although worn and decayed. The amphitheatre, patched up with modern masonry, had been converted into an arena for the bullfights. Merida once contained a very large population. For an inland town its situation is particularly favourable. It is now much reduced; but, possessing as it does so many Roman antiquities, it must be considered an important and interesting place.

On the 3d of September, we crossed the plain extending from Merida to Badajos, the head-quarters of the division, and General Tilson's brigade occupying Montijo. A mile to the westward, nearer to the Guadiana, lies the village of La Puebla de la Calçada. In it the 29th regiment was, for the first time, cantoned during the campaign. La Puebla is a village exclusively inhabited by persons employed in agriculture,—the houses, nearly of equal importance, are all cleanly, and well constructed for the purpose of giving shelter and coolness from the excessive heat of the season. Nothing can be less interesting than the country in the vicinity of La Puebla. It is perfectly flat, without wood; the plains present no variety. The Guadiana, at this season an insignificant stream, steals through a chasm sufficiently deep to prevent its being seen, except when closely approached.

The town of Lobon, on the brink of an elevation directly opposite, crowns an unbroken shapeless cliff of considerable height, affording neither variety nor boldness to the landscape.

Lord Wellington's head-quarters were now established at Badajos; General Sherbrooke's division being encamped near Talavera la Real, a small town on the left bank of the Guadiana. Early on the

morning of the 6th, the sick of General Hill's division moved from Montijo and La Puebla, in the direction of Badajos, on their route to Elvas, now become the general hospital of the army. I accompanied these detachments, in charge of that belonging to the 29th regiment. We forded the Guadiana about two leagues in advance of La Puebla; and having passed Talavera la Real, entered the plain extending twelve miles, and terminating under the walls of the capital of Estremadura.

The first view of the city of Badajos from the Talavera road is very striking. Placed on an elevated situation, the castle rises immediately above the Guadiana, that stream washing the northern base of the rock on which it stands. The fortifications descend gradually on the low ground to the south-east of the town. Its spires and public buildings are seen successively in the distance; and to the front are plantations of olive, giving it a verdant and picturesque appearance.

The Guadiana, even in summer, is, under the walls of Badajos, a fine river. It seems to have forced an unwilling passage between the castle rock, and the precipitous bank on which Fort San Christoval stands; the chasm having the appearance of being sufficient only to admit of the unobstructed course

of the river. Another Roman bridge adorns the Guadiana at Badajos, near to which is the Alameda, or public walk. Nothing that I have ever experienced in this delightful climate equalled the calm, placid, glowing, genial feeling during the twilight of a September evening on the Alameda at Badajos. The cathedral is not one of the most splendid. A large square tower is its only exterior decoration: within, it is low in the roof, and inelegant.

The route to Portugal passes out of the walls of Badajos by the Puerta de las Palmas. It then crosses the bridge, a structure six hundred yards in length, protected by a tête de pont, and under the fire of Fort San Christoval.

Upon gaining the right bank of the Guadiana, Elvas, with its forts, appears in the distance. The road leads through a plain terminated by some rising ground, covered with olive-trees. Elvas, a fortified town, is so situated as to be commanded by two neighbouring heights. Upon these, however, forts have been erected. The one to the northeast of the town, constructed in 1766 by Conte Schomberg Lippe, and bearing his name, is placed on an eminence of considerably greater altitude than either the city or Fort San Lucia; it is a place of great strength, seated on the summit of a conical hill, and

apparently rendered invulnerable both by nature and art.

The river Caya, between Badajos and Elvas, forms the boundary of the kingdoms. Formerly most of the places on the Portuguese frontier were fortified. Elvas alone continues to possess military importance along the whole line from the Guadiana to Almeida. It is a singular fact—such is the varied principle, the uncertain tenure, upon which military operations depend—that two fortified towns, placed under similar circumstances, in enmity to the invading armies, only three leagues distant, should, during the course of the Peninsular war, have experienced so very different a fate. Badajos suffered from no less than four sieges; Elvas was never regularly invested.

Elvas is a large and populous town, but, being built upon a ridge, the streets are steep and irregular. The Plaza, generally the most conspicuous, best arranged part of Peninsular towns, is in Elvas insignificant,—the buildings being of an inferior class, and its area circumscribed.

It is impossible ever to pass the Spanish frontier into Portugal without being forcibly struck with the difference, in appearance, habits, and manner, of its inhabitants,—a comparison little favourable to the

latter. To invariable inferiority in personal appearance is added the impression created by a language apparently keeping pace with the reduced physical stature of the utterer—the noble, sonorous Castillian being converted into a mongrel, mincing tongue. The high bearing of the Spaniard, which has survived ages of misrule and degradation, is not to be met with in his Lusitanian neighbour. The Castillian and Moorish blood flowing in his veins, still give him an external that belies the insignificance which despotism and ignorance have too frequently rendered triumphant in his character.

The sojourn of the British army on the plains of Estremadura soon produced the most injurious effects. Sickness rapidly spread through the different corps of which it was composed. Typhus fever obtained more than usual influence over the constitutions of its victims: the hospitals were crowded. Elvas became one great receptacle of disease. Without any visible cause, certainly without overstrained exertion, the army was encumbered with 10,000 sick. The regimental hospitals teemed with cases beyond the reach of removal; every succeeding day added to the list. The month of September passed without any circumstance occurring to draw our attention from the sameness and perfect want of interest that prevailed;

no movement of the troops, no approach of the enemy, no prospect of departure from the sandy plains, on which we appeared fixed to witness only the ignoble death of the best and bravest soldiers. It is for historians to detail, with all their *impartiality* and sound judgment, the reason for this waste of life; for an humble narrator of events and circumstances which he witnessed, it is sufficient to state, that, neither then nor since, having dispassionately considered the matter, have I ever been enabled to discover a sufficient reason for Lord Wellington subjecting his army to this mortal and apparently unnecessary infliction.

On the 4th of October, Lord Wellington reviewed General Hill's division on the plain of Montijo. The brigades of Generals Tilson, Richard Stewart, and Catlin Crauford, consisting of ten battalions of infantry, were in line. The regiments present were the 29th, the first battalions of the 3d, 48th, and 57th, the second of the 28th, 31st, 34th, 39th, 48th, and 66th.

The succeeding month produced no variation in the situation of the army, either as to active employment or the withdrawal of the regiments, even for a short period, from the influence of disease with which the quarters in Estremadura were so fatally

impregnated. The general hospital continued at Elvas. The cases became more virulent, the mortality increasing, while each succeeding day brought additional victims from the crowded regimental medical establishments. Nothing could be more gloomy than the prospect; change of season and of temperature alone appeared likely to check the progress of the evil.

Not having escaped from an attack of typhus fever, and being thereby prevented from immediately resuming regimental duties, a medical board recommended my removal to Lisbon. Leave of absence was consequently obtained, and on the 18th of November, accompanied by Captain Tucker, also an invalid, I commenced a journey towards the capital of Portugal.

Few districts of the Peninsula are more richly wooded or highly cultivated than the six leagues that intervene from Elvas to Estremos. The latter, a considerable town, is situated in the centre of extensive plantations of olive.

The Praça, or great square, of Estremos, is spacious, unpaved, and inelegant. It contains several convents, one of which is inhabited by nuns, so rigid in their seclusion, that no persons, with the exception of their attendants, ever obtain access within

its walls. The citadel, seated on a rock, surrounded by the city, commands a most extensive and beautiful prospect of the valley in which it is placed. Numerous country-houses, with whitened walls, afford relief and cheerfulness to the widely extended landscape; while the rising grounds, surmounted by watch-towers or distant convents, give variety and interest to the scene.

The country, as we advanced, became less rich and luxuriant, having a bolder aspect, more broken, mountainous, and picturesque. Near to Montemor the scenery is a combination of cultivation and wildness. From Vendas Novas to Aldea Gallega the road passes through a great extent of moor ground, varied at intervals by forest scenery, not confined to woods having neither extent or magnitude of timber to give them importance, but presenting, at particular points, no visible termination in the one case, and noble specimens in the other. The causewayed road, the morass, or the barren heath, at the same time impressing with a view of nature, either monotonous, repulsive, or neglected, is contrasted with the bold, rugged, luxuriant features of the cork-tree, in all its magnificent, though frequently solitary, state.

The view of Lisbon from Aldea Gallega, and in

passing the ferry, is very striking. The variety of ground, the whole extent of the city, the beautiful adjacent country, with the river and shipping, form a scene at once grand and picturesque. A light boat, and fair wind, soon transported us across the great basin of the Tagus, which river, confined by the precipitous bank of Almada, directly opposite to the town, appears to have forced out this noble estuary, to prove its grandeur and importance.

Lisbon, at this period, had the appearance of the capital of a British colony; the embassy, the navy, and the troops of that nation, seeming in undisturbed possession of the city. The Portuguese soldiers, commanded and disciplined by British officers, looked more the partisans of their powerful ally than the military force of the country to which they belonged. Every thing was apparently subjected to the control of the great power whose assistance could alone prevent the French armies from obtaining possession of the soil, and subduing the vindictive and turbulent feelings of its inhabitants. Even the jealousy natural to the people was subjected to the perfect sway obtained over their destinies and their opinions. Not a murmur escaped indicative of their stifled feelings, forming a combination of respect, hatred, and fear. The latter part of the year 1809 had been

employed by the officers attached to the Portuguese regiments, in organizing and training their respective corps,—a duty uninterrupted by the presence of an enemy, and executed with great assiduity, ability, and success.

During the inactivity of the British army in Spanish Estremadura, the enemy had directed his efforts against the Spanish troops, having the temerity to approach the capital, and to encounter his disciplined battalions in the open field. The army of General Venegas was totally defeated by General Sebastiani at Almonacid; while the largest Spanish force ever collected in one army during the war, commanded by General Ariesaga—a man equally incapable, presumptuous, and rash—was totally overthrown at Ocaña.

CHAPTER III.

Towards the close of the month of December, 1809, General Hill established the head-quarters of his division at Abrantes, Lord Wellington, with the main body of the army, having marched towards the Douro. General Fane's brigade of heavy cavalry remained, with the second division, on the banks of the Tagus.

Abrantes, naturally a strong place, surrounded by a ruined wall, had been, in some measure, fortified by the British engineers. It is a very important post, commanding the passage of the Tagus, over which river a bridge of boats had been constructed. Abrantes is a large and populous town, confusedly built, containing but few good houses, the streets being steep, narrow, and irregular. Placed on the very summit of the eminence, it is exposed to the wind from every quarter; the cold in winter is consequently extreme.

On the 5th of January, General Richard Stewart's

Drawn by Major Leith Hay

Engd by W.H.Lizars

THE CASTLE OF ALMIROH ON THE TAGUS

From the Garden of the Convent of San Antonio

brigade marched to Punhete, a small town beautifully situated at the junction of the Zezere with the Tagus. The scenery is wild and romantic, the adjacent country being covered with wood.

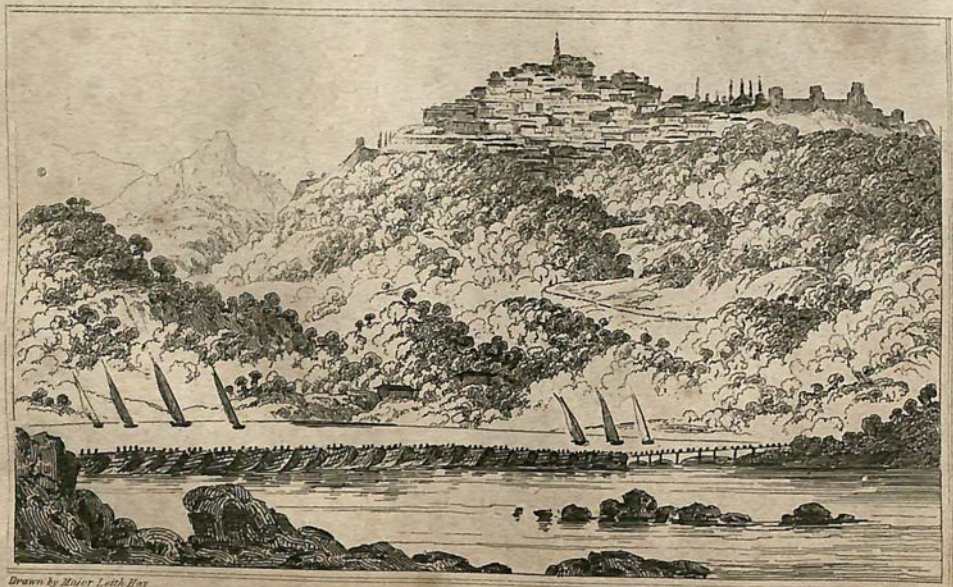
Punhete is built upon a peninsula. Abrantes, although two leagues distant, forms a fine feature in the prospect; the Tagus winds majestically through the valley, while the large white sails of the boats, passing in rapid succession, and appearing at intervals from among the trees, give life and gaiety to the scene.

At the distance of a league from Punhete is the village of Tancos, near to which, on a rock in the centre of the Tagus, stands the ruined castle of Almiroh. From the gardens of the Convent of San Antonio, situated on the banks of the river, the castle has a picturesque and striking effect.

The enemy, taking the first favourable opportunity, from the change of season, to advance into the plains of Estremadura, were now in force at Merida, having troops at Montijo, La Puebla, and the neighbouring villages, threatening Badajos and the Portuguese frontier. General Hill, in consequence of these movements, received orders to cross the Tagus, and occupy Portalegre. General Tilson's brigade

broke up from Abrantes, crossing the bridge of boats, on the 15th: Generals Richard Stewart's and Catlin Crauford's, on the following day. On the 18th, the whole division was assembled at Portalegre.

On the morning of the 19th, General Hill ordered me to proceed to the Spanish army, from thence to communicate the movements of the enemy in his front. It was late in the afternoon when I arrived at Arronches, on the road to Alburquerque, where the 2d division of the Marques de la Romana's army was then quartered. The route from Arronches leads through a wild, uncultivated country, overgrown with gum-cistus, and intersected by innumerable paths, branching off in all directions. Not having adopted the precaution of taking a guide, the tracts that beset me became bewildering,—even the bold, rocky, not to be mistaken site of the Castle of Alburquerque, did not assist in directing a selection; for the road which appeared leading towards it frequently turned abruptly to either side, penetrating into the interior of the luxuriant brushwood, in many places of a height to obstruct the view, that, when obtained, only proved the traveller had been pursuing a directly opposite course to what he intended. For two hours, no human being, or habitation of any description, presented itself: it became



Drawn by Major Leith Hay

Engd by W.H. Lizars

ABRANTES.

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dark; nor did there seem a prospect of extrication from this wilderness, when fortunately a light glimmered through the thicket. It proceeded from the habitation of some goatherds, who, upon being summoned, made their appearance. Astonished at that hour to see a stranger in the unfrequented vicinity of their hut, and alarmed at the circumstance, these peasants became for a time incommunicative. At last, however, one of their number, influenced by bribery, agreed to conduct me on the road leading to Alburquerque.

General Carlos O'Donnell, with his division, consisting of 4500 infantry, 700 cavalry, and some artillery, occupied the town and neighbourhood; his advanced posts being three leagues in front on the route to Caceres, and at Villar del Rey, on that of Merida.

The following day I accompanied General O'Donnell to his advance upon the Aliseda road. This post was commanded by Don Carlos de España, then Colonel of the Tiradores de Castilla.

Don Carlos, a Frenchman by birth, of the ancient family of Foix, and brother to the Marques d'Espagne, had, upon taking arms in the Spanish cause, altered his name to España—a precaution calculated to facilitate his advancement in a country where

every thing bearing affinity to France was for the time considered with hostility and abhorrence. He was active, intelligent, and brave, without difficulty becoming distinguished in an army deficient in the former qualities, however much individually they might possess the latter. Don Carlos had been favourably noticed during the former campaign, when his regiment formed part of the force under the command of Sir Robert Wilson.

On the 23d, General O'Donnell and myself rode to Villar del Rey, where we remained some hours with the brigadier-general commanding. When about two leagues advanced on our return, a dragoon overtook the General, with information that the enemy had entered soon after his departure, that the Spaniards had been driven out, and that the town was in possession of the French cavalry.

This was one of the frequent foraging expeditions of the enemy, made solely for the purpose of levying contributions, or procuring provisions. These were generally undertaken by forces proportioned to the size of the towns, or the vicinity of hostile troops. In the present case, being aware of a Spanish division occupying that part of the country, the column sent to Villar del Rey was of unusual strength, consisting of a division of infantry—the brigade of

Drawn by Major Leith Hay. *Engd by W.H.Lizars*

THE CASTLE OF ZAGALA.

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light cavalry of General Soult, with five pieces of cannon.

No intention of attacking General O'Donnell, or forcing him from his quarters at Alburquerque, appears to have been contemplated by this movement. Having possessed Villar del Rey for the night, the French column exacted as much as was practicable, and threatened more. The enemy retired on the following morning, when 700 Spanish infantry, with a squadron of dragoons, again obtained quiet and undisputed possession of the town. The 2d corps d'armée at this period had troops in Montijo, La Puebla, Cordovilla, Lobon, and La Roca, the latter being distant two leagues from Villar del Rey.

The divisions of the Marques de la Romana's army arriving from the Sierra de Francia, had crossed the Tagus, and were marching to occupy a line extending along the frontier, having Alburquerque on its left, with Campo Mayor as the head-quarters.

The policy of the Marques Romana had, for some time, invariably been to act upon the defensive. Taught by experience to estimate the real quality of the troops which he commanded, a mountain warfare seemed alone adapted to his means, and, at the same time, best calculated to harass and wear out the French soldiers, who, in every person, civil or mili-

tary, beheld a foe. He successfully maintained this system in Gallicia, where, although frequently a fugitive, and never enabled to keep his ground when formidably attacked, he contrived to support a guerilla species of warfare, more fatal to the French armies than any they had yet encountered. During his absence, when called to the seat of government, the command of the army of the Left devolved upon the Duque del Parque, one of those men destined to control others, without having any of the requisite qualities to ensure success.

The battle of Tamames—the solitary instance during the war of a Spanish force, unassisted, defeating an enemy of not very disproportioned strength—gave a temporary eclat to his military character, soon to vanish before subsequent errors, crowned by the circumstance of fighting a general action at Alba, with the river Tormes rolling between the divisions of his army.

The information received daily at General O'Donnell's quarters of the enemy's movements, was not of peculiar interest. It merely detailed the alteration of position for the purpose of levying contributions, which was the constant practice in the French army during the whole Peninsular war. Rarely supplied with magazines, with a commissariat acting

only upon principles of exaction, it became part of the duty performed to march and obtain supplies, —not, indeed, by sacking the towns and villages, which would at once have annihilated the sources from whence they derived subsistence, but by taking as much as possible, without incurring the risk of forcing emigration, or preventing a future visit from being in some degree attended with success.

On the 5th of February the weather suddenly changed; the air became cold; rain fell for days without intermission; the rivers were flooded; the Guadiana unfordable in any situation. This produced an immediate change in the French quarters, only tending to remove their troops further from Alburquerque.

The 9th and 10th, the weather again became fair, the floods subsided, and the rivers became passable. A French detachment, 1000 strong, crossed the river Aljucen, and marched upon Caceres, to levy contributions on the richest town of Spanish Estremadura.

Information having reached General O'Donnell that the enemy's detachment had taken up its quarters in Caceres, (no other French troops being within several leagues of that town,) he resolved to march and dislodge it. On the morning of the 12th, advancing with 2500 infantry and 300 cavalry, he halt-

ed for the night near Aliseda. On the 13th he arrived at Arroyo del Puerco, from whence he again proceeded, encamping, at one o'clock in the morning of the 14th, within six miles of Caceres. It is a singular proof of the situation in which the French armies were placed in Spain, that so intelligent an officer as General Foy should have remained in ignorance of the approach of a column that had taken upwards of forty-eight hours in advancing eleven leagues,—which had passed the night within a league and a half of his quarters, and might, with common energy or conduct, have completely cut him off.

At daybreak, the Spanish troops were again in motion. General O'Donnell marched direct upon the town, the cavalry and Tiradores de Castilla preceding the column. Caceres is situated at the eastern extremity of the sierra of that name, over which the road to Aldea del Caño passes, presenting very strong ground for obstructing the march of troops. Some infantry were detached by a road to the right to occupy these passes in the mountain.

When close to the town, the cavalry came in contact with the enemy's posts; the French cavalry and infantry were soon after perceived ascending the heights on the Aldea del Caño road. Don Carlos de España pressed forward with as much celerity as

possible; his light troops covering the broken ground to the right. A smart skirmish immediately commenced. Leaving the town on his left, he fired on the flank of the French column, hoping that the infantry detached to the western extremity of the sierra would arrive in time effectually to obstruct the retreating force.

General Foy, now aware of his danger, and thinking only of securing his retreat, marched rapidly on. Having a number of voltigeurs extended over the high ground on his right flank, these kept up a continued and well-directed fire, which effectually checked the near approach of the Spanish infantry; and when Don Carlos arrived at the descent from the mountain, he had the mortification to discover, instead of a disputed passage, as had been intended, that the French column had obtained an uninterrupted egress from the defiles of the sierra, and was proceeding in perfect order along the plain.

Although past the only place where such troops as the Spaniards could have fatally intercepted him, the French general was far from having secured the retreat of his column without its being subjected to serious loss. He had to traverse a level extending for many leagues, without the least variation in the ground; not a tree, or a building of any description,

to shelter his troops, or to afford the slightest assistance in checking the pursuit; added to which, the river Salor intersected the plain. That stream could be passed only at a narrow bridge, where his column must of necessity alter its formation, and where it might have been advantageously attacked.

He was saved by the inferior quality of the troops opposed. Not all Don Carlos's exertions, not his animating example, while the drums beat, and "*vivas*" resounded, could induce the Spaniards to close with the enemy. They pursued, indeed, keeping up a constant fire, frequently too distant to have much effect, at other times becoming so galling as to induce General Foy to throw out his light troops and cavalry skirmishers to a still greater distance in rear of his column and on its flanks. At length he reached the bank of the Salor. Don Carlos perceived that the moment had arrived when he could, by vigorously pressing on his rear, seriously inconvenience the enemy; he therefore renewed his efforts to accelerate the pursuit, and ordered the Spanish cavalry to charge the French when in the act of filing across the bridge. They advanced a short distance; but the enemy's chasseurs soon checked their ardour, by appearing in line to receive them.

General Foy restored his original formation the

moment he had passed the river, notwithstanding the same irregular, though constant, fire being kept up by the Tiradores de Castilla. After having persevered in the pursuit for a distance of three leagues, Don Carlos requested I would return to General O'Donnell, who was with the main body of the infantry, report to him what had occurred, and receive instructions as to his future movements. He then desisted from following the enemy, who soon disappeared.

General Foy conducted his retreat very judiciously. His column preserved a compact and soldier-like form; nor did he appear for a moment diverted from his object,—that of withdrawing from an isolated and dangerous situation, where he was assailed by a very superior force. The only loss sustained by the Spanish division was in the Tiradores de Castilla, which corps had about thirty men killed or wounded: that of the enemy was more considerable.

In the evening, Don Carlos and myself entered Caceres, his regiment and the cavalry being quartered in the town. General O'Donnell retired at night to Arroyo del Puerco. I became the guest of the Marques de Santa Marta.

After arranging for the accommodation of the troops, the next point was proving the extent of

gratitude the Junta of Caceres would evince for relieving them from the presence of the enemy. In conformity to his instructions, Don Carlos directed that council to be assembled, and to it I accompanied him. The opening of the conference consisted in a declaration on the part of the military authority, that without support from the towns, particularly such as Caceres, the Spanish armies could not carry on the war of resistance, upon which their temporal and spiritual comfort and happiness depended. This was answered by professions of gratitude, patriotism, and poverty, on the civil side. The next step was to state a demand for shoes, accoutrements, and money; astounding no doubt, but received with a degree of coolness and unconcern, proving the extent to which custom can reconcile even the most unwelcome requisitions. The civil authorities now argued on the score of inability; there were no shoes, no accoutrements, and but little money. After a warm discussion, it was admitted that there were some means; but taxing their extent was, if possible, a more perplexing difficulty than the former. At last, after considerable dexterity, some liberality, a great portion of bold demand, only to be palliated by being a public measure, and various indications of the contribution be-

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ALBURQUERQUE.

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ing more produced by fear than any other feeling, it was settled that 30,000 reals should issue from the coffers of Caceres on the following morning. I am thus particular as to this negotiation, in order to give some idea of the situation in which the inhabitants of Spanish towns were constantly placed during the progress of the war. If the above picture appears to others not so serious as it did to me, I have to add that the parley was between friends and countrymen,—leaving them to judge how much the situation must have been *improved* on the arrival of starving Frenchmen, probably infuriated against the whole population, by some recent act of summary vengeance on unfortunate stragglers, or wounded soldiers of their army.

On the morning of the 15th, I left Caceres, overtaking the Spanish division near Aliseda. General O'Donnell had proceeded to Alburquerque, where his troops were again assembled on the following day. The inhabitants of Caceres enjoyed but short-lived tranquillity in consequence of our visit; for on the 22d, eight hundred French cavalry arrived, plundered the town, retiring in the evening towards Truxillo.

The distance from Alburquerque to Portalegre not being great, I made frequent excursions to see

General Hill, and to receive his orders. On the 29th, I received information from General O'Donnell of the enemy's advance in force to Caceres, Arroyo del Puerco, and Malpartida; at the same time General Hill heard of French troops, supposed to be of the sixth corps, having passed the Puerto de Baños, and entered Estremadura Alta. He directed my immediate return to Alburquerque, where I learnt that Don Carlos España, now a brigadier-general, had advanced to Aliseda with three regiments of infantry, and that the French troops from Malpartida and Arroyo had encamped on the opposite bank of the Salor, at the distance of half a league, the advanced posts being in close contact.

On the 30th, I joined Don Carlos, in his camp on the heights behind Aliseda. The enemy had again retired to his cantonments without making any attack. At daybreak we were on horseback to reconnoitre; nothing appeared, except some cavalry patrols, who retreated on being fired at. At nine o'clock the peasants brought information of the cavalry having left Arroyo; and about midday it was ascertained that the second corps had marched from Caceres in the direction of Merida.

The moment the enemy disappeared from his front, General España broke up from the cold bleak heights

of Aliseda, sending his infantry back to the head-quarters of the division, while we proceeded for the purpose of ascertaining the real direction of the enemy's motions, and, accompanied by a squadron of cavalry, again entered Caceres. The Marques de Santa Marta, kind and hospitable under all circumstances, notwithstanding the serious visitations he had been subjected to, received us most cordially. General Reynier had been quartered in his house.

The whole of the second corps, consisting of the divisions of General Merle, Comte Heudelet, and the light cavalry brigade of General Soult, had been quartered in Caceres, or the towns in its immediate neighbourhood.

It was evident that the rapid movement now made by General Reynier had some more important object than a mere change of quarters; it was supposed to be connected with a combined effort to annihilate the army of General Ballesteros, which had given considerable annoyance to the French force in Andalusia. The night of the 31st, General Reynier's advance reached Cordovilla, while his infantry halted at Aldea del Caño. The day following, part of his corps crossed the Guadiana at Merida, moving upon Almendralejo, on the direct road to Santa Olalla and Seville.

On the 3d, a dispatch was received from General O'Donnell, acquainting Don Carlos of the Marques de la Romana having appointed him to the command of a corps destined to move upon Merida, for the purpose of creating a diversion in favour of General Ballesteros; that 1000 light infantry, with 200 cavalry, had been detached to La Roca, there to await his orders; and adding, that the more expeditiously he joined these troops, and put them in motion, the better. Late in the evening, we marched for La Roca, by the route of Zangana.

It was not satisfactorily ascertained that the whole of the second corps d'armée had quitted the right bank of the Guadiana; but in pursuance of orders, and relying upon the information of those by whom they had been given, we followed the track of the French troops, accompanied by a squadron of cavalry, in whose steadiness it would have been folly to have placed great reliance. The night was dark and cold. We occasionally questioned the peasants on our route as to the enemy, but heard no tidings of any of his troops being near enough to try the courage of the Castillian cavalry. At three in the morning we reached Zangana; at daybreak were again on horseback, and at La Roca found General O'Donnell, who had advanced to the ford of La Lamia, with three

regiments of infantry and four pieces of cannon, to support the movement on Montijo.

Instead of advancing into the plains of Estremadura, without being opposed, and creating a diversion, by occasioning the recall of troops gone on other service, it was soon proved that the country north of the Guadiana continued to be occupied by the enemy, in sufficient force to prevent the Spaniards making either extensive or formidable inroads. The corps of Don Carlos had made a very short march, before a dragoon overtook its commander, ordering him to halt until General O'Donnell came up.

Subsequent to General España's departure, he had received information of the enemy being in force at Merida,—that a cavalry skirmish had taken place early in the morning near to Montijo, and that the French advanced posts were only two leagues from the town.

Under these circumstances, although not considered advisable to send infantry into the plains so far in advance as had been proposed, it at the same time became important to ascertain the actual position and force of these newly arrived enemies. For this purpose, Don Carlos's detachment of cavalry was augmented to two hundred and fifty; with it we proceeded to Montijo.

The place was quiet, but its inhabitants expressed great anxiety and alarm, in consequence of the visit they had in the morning received, which they doubted not would be repeated. The cavalry were piqueted in rear of the town, the roads patrolled; and we remained undisturbed for the night.

The slight affair which had taken place in the morning was very characteristic of the warlike habits of the country. The same men who invariably gave way when opposed in open day, (and with reference to the Spanish cavalry, the experience of the Peninsular war proves that to have been the case,) were not far distant from the enemy, whose presence in this instance they had every reason to expect. In such a state of apathy or unconcern were they, that thrusts of the Polish lances broke their slumbers. They were apparently as regardless of danger as the best and most experienced troops; and must have known that danger was near, yet adopted no precaution to avert it. They retired not out of reach of observation, but quietly and contentedly slept upon the plain, until trampled upon by the enemy's horsemen! These same men, showing this disregard of peril, and recklessness of safety, would probably have turned their backs and fled, if assailed by their opponents face to face; a proof that the

inhabitants of some countries can sleep away their fears.

For some days we remained at Montijo, taking precautions to ascertain the approach of the enemy, being always on horseback an hour before daylight, and having patrols upon the roads in every direction. At length information arrived of Marshal Soult having marched from Valverde and Don Alvaro,—his cavalry crossing the Guadiana two leagues from Merida,—the infantry of his corps moving by the right bank of the river to Medellin. Subsequent intelligence announced his having withdrawn from the latter, that his head-quarters had moved from Don Benito to Villa Nueva de la Serena, and that no troops, either of his or any other French corps, continued to be cantoned on the right bank of the Guadiana between Medellin and Badajos.

By this movement on the part of the French general, the whole extent of the fertile province of Estremadura, to the north of the Guadiana, was left in possession of the Spanish armies, Badajos becoming the head-quarters of the Marques de la Romana. At this period the author of these pages quitted the Spanish army, returned to General Hill's head-quarters, and from thence proceeded to Lisbon, where he

again became aide-de-camp to General Leith, recently arrived from England to join the army.

Nothing can more strongly prove the vacillating conduct of the enemy, nor any thing be adduced more decidedly to place beyond the reach of controversy, the inertness, deficiency in judgment, occasional despondency, and frequent temerity, of the Spanish government, than the situation of all parties at the present moment. In the first place, the French armies in Spain were directed by a weak and erring person, possessing none of the talent of his brother; commanding, without capacity; a king, without a people; a generalissimo, neither respected nor obeyed. To no set of men was this fact more evident than the French marshals, who, despising the military judgment from whence the orders emanated, felt prepared if possible to evade them, and their own high reputation induced their taking the responsibility of doing so. Thus, at the same time, one corps d'armée was acting in conformity to the orders received from Madrid, while another, destined to co-operate, was adopting a directly different sphere of action, according to the caprice or obstinacy of its commander. In addition to this course of proceeding, in itself enough to ensure the discomfiture of armies, is to be considered the jealousy of each

other constantly bursting into publicity among these generals, by whom, and through whose exertions, it has been *ingeniously* supposed the Emperor Napoleon accomplished in other countries his unparalleled successes.

Next is to be considered the actual situation, and what had been the co-operation or assistance given by the army of Lord Wellington. The true estimate of the preparations for a favourable reception of that assistance, appears to rest with the undisputed fact, that, after such a lengthened period of professions, of experience, of means, or of opportunities to have perfected, by well-arranged combination, both in equipment and in discipline, an effective army, no force deserving that name had been organized. But, even admitting that the government could not be responsible for the quality of the troops, and that the British general was soon convinced of their perfect inability to perform the duties of a regular army, even then he would have kept the field, had it been possible to induce the Spanish authorities to use the slightest exertion for the maintenance of his troops. That was not to be obtained. The threat of withdrawing found the Central Junta as inactive, as inefficient, or as treacherous, as ever.

Disappointed in every anticipated assistance,—

having won a battle, the result of which was, being obliged to abandon his hospitals and the cannon he had taken,—his troops nearly starved, escaping most imminent danger,—being beset by an auxiliary force, which, instead of assisting, served but to consume the produce of the country, and make the supply of his own army more precarious and more difficult;—such had been the situation of Lord Wellington, and it was under such circumstances, with reference to all parties hitherto engaged, that he retired from Spain. It was with an army reduced by sickness that the British general had now to defend the Portuguese frontier, having left the battle upon the Spanish territory for a time to be fought by the troops of the country, the Guerillas, and the enemy.

The British government, it must be admitted, had made great efforts in its assistance to the Spanish cause. Armies had appeared, whose qualities will be most correctly appreciated by reference to their achievements. By them battles had been won, but under such disadvantageous or unfortunate circumstances as to increase respect for the troops, without greatly strengthening the impression of benefit derived from their co-operation. Little had yet been accomplished in forming that stupendous power which the talent of Lord Wellington,

and the successes of his army, ultimately created. He was, at this crisis of the war, a popular and distinguished general, directing the army of a great country, opposed on the part of the Spanish government by some degree of jealousy, and a weight of self-sufficient inactivity and misrule. Great himself in military resource, he was thwarted in the expected exertions of his allies, and unfortunate in the well-intentioned but ignorantly applied efforts of the British ministry; it remained for a series of events, for an improved policy on the part of those furnishing the means, and for an uninterrupted course of distinguished conduct in his army, to create the glorious situation he afterwards filled in the estimation of the government and the people on whose territory he was fighting the battle of independence. There were two degrees of character to be won from the universal voice of the Spanish nation: that Lord Wellington and the British army were not inferior to their own generals or their own troops; secondly, that they were in every respect superior. The first had been wrung from the most determined advocates of Castillian pre-eminence. The latter, that of decided superiority, was alone conquered by such a chain of events as it will be my endeavour subsequently, though imperfectly, to detail.

The result of the battle of Wagram having again restored peace to Germany, 100,000 men reinforced the French armies in Spain. Thus possessed of the means by which the character of the war in the Peninsula was once more destined to be varied, the Emperor Napoleon directed the invasion of Portugal, not, as had been the case on two former occasions, by one corps, but by an army composed of a large portion of his disposable force, commanded by an officer whose name was sufficiently conspicuous in the annals of the French Revolutionary army to carry with it an impression only inferior to that of Napoleon himself. But there existed another motive for this inroad,—that of forcing the British troops from the Peninsula. Napoleon at once perceived the infinitely greater interests depending upon that measure, than the mere fact of bringing superior force to vanquish an army numerically weak, or the depriving Spain and Portugal of its assistance. He foresaw the danger to his own situation and views created by the presence of Lord Wellington's army on the continent of Europe. At Vimiera, Coruña, Oporto, and Talavera, the French had ascertained the quality of their island opponents. To crush such troops when inferior in numbers was within the reach of probability; permitting them undisturbedly to receive reinforcements, or to be joined

by equally good troops, hitherto employed on other service, was unlike the policy of such a man as Napoleon; but above all was the impression resulting from the presence of a British army, giving confidence to the Spanish cause, protracting the struggle, forming the nucleus of future strengths to be marshalled against him. It was this influence which he especially wished to destroy.

The Marshal Prince d'Essling was appointed general-in-chief of the army of Portugal, composed of the 6th corps, under Marshal Ney, the 8th, commanded by general the Duc d'Abrantes, the 2d, by Comte Reynier, and the cavalry corps of General Monbrun. It was not considered necessary to withdraw General Reynier from the frontier near the Tagus until after the first offensive operations had been carried into effect. These consisted of the sieges of Cuidad Rodrigo and Almeida, which were carried on exclusively by the 6th corps.

The siege and capture of Cuidad Rodrigo formed the most important event of Marshal Massena's preparatory operations. The investment took place early in June, the garrison surrendering on the 10th of July. The town was defended with considerable firmness and perseverance on the part of the Spaniards; nor was it until the Duc d'Elchingen had

made his arrangements for assaulting the breach, then considered practicable in the body of the place, that the governor capitulated. The opinion of the French army was against the mode in which the attack had been conducted, the loss sustained by the assailants being very considerable, and the time taken to reduce a place not of the first order, considered disproportioned to the means employed.

Vizeu had for some time been the head-quarters of Lord Wellington. In its vicinity were cantoned the 1st, 3d, and 4th divisions of his army, with a large proportion of the cavalry; and in advance, upon the Coa, was the light division, with some Portuguese infantry, detachments of British cavalry, and the troop of horse-artillery commanded by Captain Ross. At Portalegre was the corps of General Hill, and at Thomar that of Major-general Leith.

During the year 1809, and the commencement of that following, the Portuguese army had been disciplined and equipped. The appearance of the regiments had rapidly improved, many of them becoming incorporated with the divisions of British infantry. It only remained to be ascertained whether their conduct in the field, or capacity for military movement, kept pace with their now really soldier-like demeanour.

On the 14th of July, General Leith assumed the command of ten thousand infantry and cavalry at Thomar. This corps, destined in the first instance to observe the line of the river Zezere, was in reserve to that of General Hill. Its movements in great measure depended upon those of General Reynier, still in Spanish Estremadura, whose operations were of course more closely watched by the troops nearer to the frontier.

The second corps d'armée crossed the Tagus about the 20th of July, occupying Plasencia, Galisteo, and Coria. Its cantonments changed as provisions became difficult to obtain, advancing towards the frontier of Portugal, or again penetrating to the base of the Sierra de Gredos, until the moment arrived when the Coa was to be passed, and the whole army to advance in one concentrated movement upon Lisbon.

General Hill had for some time been altering his quarters in conformity to the changeable habits of the enemy. Wherever General Reynier appeared, the British general was in his front. This became a measure, with reference to the invasion of the country, of positive importance; although it was ultimately proved, that no idea of entering the Portuguese territory on more than one line was ever con-

templated by the French generals. The nearest approach to the frontier at this time made by the second corps, was the advance of a regiment of infantry, with two squadrons of cavalry, to Salvatierra, from whence, after plundering the town, they again retired to Zarza Mayor.

General Reynier's motions appearing directed towards the north; General Hill crossed the Tagus with the whole of his infantry at Villa Velha, marching upon Castello-Branco: from thence he penetrated into the mountains towards Guarda, occupying Atalaya and Alpedrinha.

During these movements General Leith continued at Thomar, a town beautifully situated in Portuguese Estremadura, on the right bank of the river Navansi—a stream running into the Zezere, near to Punhete. On an eminence, close to the town, and domineering it to the westward, stands the convent of Christ, grandly situated, surrounded with luxuriant scenery; in itself a building of great magnitude, variety, and richness of architecture. The ruins of a Moorish castle, and very extensive aqueduct, add to the picturesque effect of this most conspicuous and noble monastery.

Thomar was founded by Galdim Paez, grand-master of the Knights Templars, in 1145. On the left

bank of the river is the site and remains of the Roman town of Navansi, built in the 852d year of the Christian era. The church of Santa Maria do Olival at Navansi is said to be the most ancient building of a similar description in Portugal. It contains a very handsome monument to the memory of the first Bishop of Funchal, erected in 1525. The convent of the Order of Christ is on a very magnificent scale, commanding a prospect of the whole surrounding country. The building has evidently been erected at different periods; the additions made from time to time proving the date by the various species of architecture peculiar to the age. The cloisters, completed in the reign of Philip III., are massive and spacious; the chapel, erected during that of Don Manuel, King of Portugal, is remarkable as well for the beauty of its external ornament as its interior decoration. It is of a circular form, having an altar in the centre, opposite to which is a lofty arch, forming the entrance to the choir, an oblong square, elevated above the body of the church; the walls are covered with paintings on panel, from subjects in the New Testament. In a private chapel is a picture by Rafaelle; in addition to which, that of Friars of the Order of Christ receiving the rules from St Benedict, and two others representing the taking

of Santarem from the Moors, and their final overthrow at Campo d'Ourique, are conspicuous ornaments of the chapel. The number of friars in the convent is reduced to twenty-five. Formerly, it contained above one hundred. They possess the land contained in the circuit of half a league, and have a revenue of 150,000 crusadoes. During the first invasion of Portugal by General Junot, the French levied a contribution of 20,000 crusadoes, which was paid by this opulent monastery in twenty-four hours. At Thomar, is a cotton manufactory on a large scale, originally established by the celebrated Marques de Pombal.

General Reynier's head-quarters were at Zarza Mayor on the 22d. Upon the morning of that day, a party of French cavalry, sixty in number, having penetrated to Ladoira, in advance of Salvatierra, were met by Captain White, in command of a troop of the 13th light dragoons, and one of Portuguese cavalry, who charged them with such success, that the whole of the enemy's detachment was either killed or made prisoners, without the loss of a single man on the part of the allies. Major Vigoureux of the 38th regiment, who had been sent in advance by General Leith, for the purpose of obtaining infor-

mation, was with Captain White, and assisted in the discomfiture of the enemy.

On the 23d, the head-quarters of Lord Wellington were at Alverca; the following day the enemy crossed the frontier. It was on the morning of the 24th July that the invasion of Portugal in 1810 really commenced. On that day, an affair of a serious description took place between the light division, the only British troops now on the Spanish territory, and the 6th corps of the French army, accompanied by three thousand cavalry. On this occasion, the light division became engaged under most critical circumstances. Very inferior in every arm, with the rapid and unfordable mountain stream of the Coa in his rear, having one only line of retreat over a narrow bridge, General Crawford was attacked by a force sufficient to have occasioned his total destruction. Never was there a more favourable opportunity presented for proceeding *tête baissée*, as the French term it, than occurred on this occasion; but it happened not to be the description of service on which, against British troops, they showed the greatest enterprise. The arena for a really vigorous French attack is one that few other troops would enter,—at all events with equal alacrity, equal spirit, or with the same apparent determination. In mounting steeps defended

by troops—in making attacks in large bodies, where a great crisis is at issue—in forcing on under fire, until all difficulties, but the personal, the close conflict with his opponent, has been overcome—the French soldier appears to be unequalled; but when perseverance has placed him on equal ground—when he apparently has obtained a chance of successfully terminating his attack, he becomes no longer formidable: and appears paralyzed by the immediate presence of his opponents—a strange and inexplicable result of so much gallantry, such gaiety, so much recklessness of danger, only to be accounted for by the supposition that the physical composition of the people does not permit the effervescence to subsist beyond a certain exertion, that, if unchecked, might have continued buoyant, but being resolutely met, becomes depressed and vanquished.

The siege of Almeida, and the unfortunate accident of the magazine exploding, which placed that fortress in possession of the enemy, were the next events that distinctly marked the progress of the campaign. Almeida, prepared for defence, numerously garrisoned, and in every respect calculated to make a protracted resistance, having so prematurely fallen, was a very fortunate circumstance for the French army. The favourable season of the year,

its erroneously supposed perfect preparation for active operations, the non-arrival of reinforcements to the allied army—all added to the importance of carrying a place, that, under ordinary circumstances, must have occasioned a delay of a month or six weeks' duration, supposing it to be assailed as Cuidad Rodrigo had previously been.

During these events, the division of General Leith continued to occupy Thomar and its neighbouring villages. On the 4th of September, an express announced the retirement of the head-quarters from Celorico. Lord Wellington, at the same time, communicated the approach of the enemy, his advance having driven in the allied piquets at Alverca and Freixadas. Gouvea became the head-quarters of the allied army.

The affair of posts at Alverca and Freixadas was the consequence of a change of quarters in the corps d'armée of the Duc d'Elchingen, on the line of his ulterior advance, but not the forerunner of an immediate attack on the part of the enemy; nor did the French general-in-chief appear prepared to take advantage of the unexpected fall of Almeida. Nearly three weeks elapsed, after the reduction of that fortress, before he seriously moved forward. This must be admitted to have been an error of Mar-

shal Massena. The time occupied in reducing Cuidad Rodrigo ought to have sufficed for the completion of his arrangements. The absence of General Reynier's corps, when Almeida fell, may have occasioned the delay; but that affords no excuse: he only awaited orders to join him, and was unobstructed in doing so; nor does there appear a sufficient reason for delaying that junction after commencing the last siege necessary to undertake before advancing upon Lisbon. What is the utility of fortunate accident in a military point of view, unless immediate advantage can be taken? It has always appeared to me a most brilliant feature in this campaign of Lord Wellington, and one presenting a remarkable contrast in the maturity of arrangement of two distinguished men. A very formidable enemy's army threatened the country which the British general was destined to defend. It reduced one fortress, and laid siege to another, when contrary to all human calculation: accident at once occasioned the fall of the latter; the consequence was, that Lord Wellington being prepared for all contingencies, the premature reduction of Almeida did not essentially annoy him, while his antagonist was unprepared promptly to follow up the advantage naturally arising from the circumstance.

Drawn by Major Leith Hay

Engd by W.H.Lizars

GUARDA.

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At length the Prince d'Essling, having reduced the encumbrances of his army, abandoned many of the unwieldy ambulances hitherto accompanying it, and left a corps under General Gardanne in the vicinity of Almeida, marched on the 15th of September, to carry into effect the ultimate objects of the campaign. The 2d and 6th corps d'armée took the direction of Guarda and Celorico, the 8th marched on Pinhel. As if to initiate the French commander into the species of warfare he was about to encounter, the convoys, following his army at the distance of a day's march, were attacked by parties of militia and ordenança at this early period of the invasion.

The line of advance adopted by the "Army of Portugal" being now placed beyond doubt, Lord Wellington ordered Generals Hill and Leith to march upon the Mondego, with the least possible delay. The latter consequently moved his corps from Thomar to Cabaços on the 18th, the following day was at Espinhal, and on the 20th at Foz d'Arouse.

Lord Wellington, having retired his army by the left bank of the Mondego, was prepared either to dispute the strong ground of the Sierra d'Estrella, or to cross the river, and occupy the Sierra de Alcoba, affording a formidable position, without forcing

which, Marshal Massena's direct route to Coimbra became obstructed.

So well-timed was the junction of the different corps of the British army, that Lord Wellington's third division, under General Picton, occupied the quarters of Foriera on the 20th, these becoming next day the cantonments of the corps from Thomar, commanded by General Leith, while at the distance of one day's march was General Hill, all moving to the same point, without interference, confusion, or delay. On the 22d, General Leith's corps was stationed at Sobriera and Casa Nova. On the following morning he crossed the Mondego at the Barca de Conselha, halting at Peña Cova for the night. Having during the 24th encamped near the church of Nuestra Senhora de Monte Alto, he moved into the position of Busaco on the morning of the 25th, occupying the extreme right of the ridge, with his flank on the Mondego, on the opposite bank of which was the whole corps of General Hill, extending to the Ponte de Murcella.

The Sierra de Busaco, after the army of Lord Wellington and the corps from Thomar had extended along its ridge, was not fully occupied; the commander of the forces therefore directed General Hill to cross the Mondego, and form on the extreme

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right of the position. To give space for this alteration, as also to condense the alignement, General Leith was ordered to move to his left. This was considered the least vulnerable part of the position, consequently the main body of the army had previously been extended from the San Antonio de Cantaro road to the junction with the Sierra de Caramula.

To form some idea of the great extent of the position at Busaco, it is only necessary to state, that after 50,000 men had been placed upon it, a space of nearly two miles intervened from the left of General Leith's corps to the right of the 3d division, standing next in line. General Picton defended the San Antonio de Cantaro road; General Hill was in force on the extreme right; the left of the position was fully occupied. The only troops considered disposable were those of General Leith, admirably placed both with reference to what was supposed probable, and what did occur. If the right of the army should be attacked, he was close at hand to support that point; if the San Antonio road became the line of attack, he was equally prepared to march in aid of General Picton. His own ground was considered not liable to assault, the ascent being particularly steep; nor did any roads intersect it coming from the direction of the French army.

The 26th was a beautiful day, with bright sunshine; nor can any thing be conceived more enlivening, more interesting, or more varied, than the scene from the heights of Busaco. Commanding a very extensive prospect to the eastward, the movements of the French army were distinctly perceptible; it was impossible to conceal them from the observation of the troops stationed along the whole range of the mountain; nor did this appear to be the object of the enemy. Rising grounds were covered with troops, cannon, or equipages: the widely extended country seemed to contain a host moving forward, or gradually condensing into numerous masses, checked in their progress by the grand natural barrier on which we were placed, and at the base of which it became necessary to pause. In imposing appearance as to numerical strength, I have never seen any thing comparable to that of the enemy's army from Busaco; it was not alone an army encamped before us, but a multitude: cavalry, infantry, artillery, cars of the country, horses, tribes of mules with their attendants, sutlers, followers of every description, crowded the moving scene upon which Lord Wellington and his army looked down.

Some French officers, who have written upon the subject, admit the intention of creating an erroneous

impression as to the strength of the French army, and blame Marshal Massena for having subsequently displayed his force in order of battle, before such a position as Busaco, where it became impossible to support the delusion,—the separation from non-combatants at once proving the real strength of the army, in direct opposition to the supposed important object of confirming an exaggerated estimate as to the irresistible means employed for the subjugation of Portugal.

The evening of the 26th closed upon the allies finally arranged in position; after dark, the whole country in front was illuminated by the fires of the French army. The 6th and 8th corps of the enemy had arrived in front of the position by the routes of Casel de Maria and Mortagoa, the 2d by that leading to San Antonio de Cantaro.

On the forenoon of the 26th, I was directed to advance in front with a squadron of Portuguese cavalry, and report the movements of the enemy on the roads close to the right bank of the Mondego, directly communicating with the valley of Larangeira. In the execution of this service, we proceeded two leagues without encountering an enemy, the French advancing by roads more to their right, and only extending to the left when immediately in front of the sierra. As we rode forward, a cannonade and

fire of musketry was heard in the direction of St Combadao, where the Duc d'Elchingen and General Reynier were forcing back upon the position the advance of the allied army.

The scene presented during this short reconnoissance was of the most interesting description. Passing through a very picturesque and beautiful country, we occasionally descended to the banks of the Mondego, or ascended the eminences, from whence was discernible the enemy's line of march on the right, at intervals enveloped in dust and smoke. To the rear was the imposing line of mountain occupied by the allied army, luxuriant woods, fertile valleys: great excitement, and a brilliant atmosphere, added to the effect of the whole.

The Duc d'Elchingen, on arriving at the base of the Sierra de Busaco, was impressed with an opinion as to the unattackable nature of the ground; but Marshal Massena, after reconnoitring, determined to try its strength. At daybreak, on the 27th, reports of cannon were heard in the direction of the convent of Busaco. These were at first audible but at intervals; they soon after became incessant, accompanied by heavy discharges of musketry. The line of the mountain, irregular in its course, intersected by ravines, varying in height, forming the

convex of a circle, from where we were stationed, prevented the slightest prospect of the part of the position attacked.

It soon, however, became evident, from the sound of the firing, that General Picton was also engaged; but although nearest in the line, his troops, and those by whom the 3d division was assailed, were alike hidden from our view.

In the immediate front of General Leith's corps, no hostile movements were perceptible; he, therefore, with the concurrence of General Hill, put his division in motion, marching by his left along the summit of the ridge intervening between the ground on which he had encamped the preceding night, and the San Antonio de Cantaro road.

On approaching the right of General Picton's position, the whole sierra presented a crowd of light troops, masses of British and French infantry, and a very warm contest in full progress. At this moment, the enemy had penetrated to the very summit of the mountain; the outnumbered light infantry of General Picton were severely pressed. When the smoke dispelled, that at intervals enveloped the whole extent of the face and crest of the ridge, the highest rocks appeared in possession of the French voltigeurs: one officer was particularly con-

spicuous, on the very highest point; cheering, and waving his schakòs, he urged on his comrades, then climbing the ascent.

A column of the enemy now appeared gaining the plateau on the mountain top, with its head directed so as to ascend diagonally to the line of the allied army, by which its left flank was exposed to the troops arriving from the right of the British position.

Colonel Barnes's brigade of General Leith's corps, composed of the Royal, 9th, and 38th regiments, had been advanced to the head of the column, and consequently first came in contact with the enemy; the 9th regiment, commanded by Colonel Cameron, being the leading battalion, when about a hundred yards distant, wheeled into line, firing a volley, the effect of which was terrific; the ground was covered with dead and dying, not new levies or mercenaries, but the élite of the French army. This destructive fire being followed up by an immediate charge, the enemy gave way, rushing down the steep face of the sierra in the utmost confusion; nor did his troops attempt to rally until on the same ground from whence they had advanced to this most unsuccessful and murderous attack.

On the same space of ground has seldom been

seen such destruction as overtook the division of the 2d corps on this occasion.

Previous to this signal repulse, the other division of General Reynier's corps had in a similar way been driven from the sierra, by the 3d division, after an attack equally gallant and hopeless.

The battle to the left of the convent, and sustained exclusively by the light division and General Pack's brigade, closed with brilliant success on the part of the allies.

General Loison's division of Marshal Ney's corps, with one brigade of the division Marchand, had attacked these troops; while the other brigade of General Marchand, and the entire division of General Mermet, were formed in mass at the base of the mountain, in readiness to support the first attack. The 8th corps d'armée, in reserve, was prepared to move forward at a moment's warning.

The French cavalry were stationed near a village to the right of General Reynier's bivouac on the night of the 26th, and to the rear of the whole army.

General Simon's brigade, at the head of the division Loison, advanced with great resolution, notwithstanding the difficulties encountered; nor is it light praise to bestow upon any troops, when it is admit-

ted that they made great progress for a time under all the disadvantages of a very steep ascent, a heavy cannonade, and such troops as the light division to oppose; at last they were forced back, having sustained enormous loss, and, with the two other brigades forming the column, were bayoneted back from whence they came. General Simon was wounded and taken.

The column advancing on the road from San Antonio de Cantaro, repelled, as formerly stated, by the right of the 3d division and Colonel Barnes's brigade, made the attack under very desperate circumstances. When it commenced to ascend the sierra, no troops to the left of the road were visible on the summit; consequently, in pressing forward, with all the characteristic activity, alacrity, firmness, and incessant progress of a French attack, the attention of officers and soldiers was diverted from whence the real danger ultimately proceeded. When not obscured by the constant fire kept up in advancing, the men were seen pressing forward, loading with trailed arms, but not halting for a moment. On one of these occasions, the flank of at least 5000 men became exposed to view; into that flank was the fire of Colonel Barnes's brigade deliberately discharged, searching its ranks from left to right. It

is difficult to imagine any circumstances under which musketry could be more annihilating: the result proved that it was so.

There was something exhilarating to a degree in the whole day of Busaco: as it advanced, a bright sun shone on the armies; no event had occurred to counteract the full tide of success attending the defensive warfare adopted by Lord Wellington. Strength of position, with great firmness of purpose, had enabled the allies to repel very serious attacks with comparatively trifling loss; the glacis of the mountain-barrier on which we stood was heaped with bodies of the enemy. The innumerable host that had been displayed on the previous day were checked; while the soldiers, brave and skilful enough to have mounted the summit of such a position, were repulsed, and driven back upon their disheartened comrades. General Foy received one of his numerous wounds upon this occasion.

General Graindorge, commanding a brigade of the second corps, was killed, as were many superior officers. The general of division, Merle, was severely wounded. The French regiments that suffered most from the attack of Colonel Barnes's brigade were the 2me and 4me legère, the 15me, 17me, 36me, and 70me, of the line.

One of the results of this action, and certainly not the least important, was ascertaining that the Portuguese troops would conduct themselves well under fire,—that their behaviour when opposed to the enemy was consistent with their highly improved and soldierlike appearance; nor did a single instance occur, during this first trial, in which their firmness could be questioned. Wherever their battalions met the enemy, the contest was supported with credit to themselves, and to those British officers, who, in the course of a difficult, frequently unpleasant duty, had, by perseverance, military knowledge, and great exertion, created such troops from the materials presented by the Portuguese army, when purely national in its habits, its officers, its insubordination, and its insignificance.

A stronger proof of the power or effect of discipline cannot be adduced in the history of armies, than was exhibited by these soldiers during the course of their subsequent service under Lord Wellington. They became excellent troops, equal to contend with the French infantry; under *ordinary circumstances*, acting with the same energy and bravery as their island allies: no higher praise appears just or necessary.

The 8th Portuguese regiment, commanded by

Colonel Douglas, was particularly distinguished. By that corps, in conjunction with the 45th and 88th British regiments, the most successful attack of the day was repulsed. Placed as they were on very commanding ground, the loss sustained by these regiments, being nearly equal to that of all the other corps of the army combined, proves the serious nature of the contest from which they had acquired such merited distinction.

The troops continued in expectation of renewed assault during the day, but no movement indicated any intention on the part of the enemy to renew the costly experiment he had already made. Light troops skirmished near the base of the mountain; on its summit the most perfect confidence was established: a feeling seemed to prevail that no efforts could shake the allied army, or force its position.

Before dark, General Leith's corps withdrew from the eastern face of the ridge, taking up its bivouac at the commencement of the descent, looking towards Coimbra, but near to the summit; about a hundred yards lower down the slope were assembled a considerable number of the French wounded, who, although removed from the immediate scene of action, had not yet been transported to the rear. The bright day we had enjoyed closed with a night of extreme cold,

rendering the situation of these men much to be commiserated; wounded, laid on the heath, without any description of covering, their complaints were loud and incessant, accompanied by entreaties to remove them from the rigour of the bleak mist that now shrouded the sierra, attended by a piercing wind.

An hour before daybreak on the 28th, the troops were in line: mist continued to hang on the mountain: all remained quiet during the whole extent of the position; nor when light appeared, did any sound proclaim the approach of a renewed attack.

A flank movement alone remained for the adoption of the French army, with any prospect of success. Circumstances rendered even that very precarious; forcing the position was not to be accomplished. There existed one road, the occupation of which by the allies, was a matter of uncertainty at the headquarters of the Prince of Essling, intelligence received from the peasantry inducing the French marshal to hope that it remained open. General St Croix was sent, with two regiments of dragoons, to reconnoitre and report. He ascended to the summit on the route by Avilans do Cima to Sardao, without encountering an enemy; and returned with the information, which at once determined the movement. The whole army was directed, in one column, upon this

road, led by the cavalry, with the brigade St Croix at its head.

At ten o'clock on the forenoon of the 29th, the sierra was passed without the slightest opposition, the army descending into the plain on the Coimbra side of the mountain.

The route thus, of necessity, adopted by Marshal Massena, considerably lengthened his distance to Coimbra; while the allies, descending from the sierra by the more direct roads, without difficulty arrived, previous to the enemy's approach, on the great line leading to Lisbon.

On the morning of the 29th, General Hill marched in the direction of Espinhal and Thomar, the main body of the army descending the right bank of the Mondego. General Leith's corps encamped near Diantura, a village one league from Coimbra. From thence it proceeded, on the 30th, to the Quinta de San Jorge, the country residence of the friars of Santa Cruz at Coimbra, beautifully situated on the left bank of the river, surrounded with orange-groves and vineyards. From observation of Portuguese scenery, I should be inclined to select the valley of the Mondego at Coimbra as the richest and most beautiful portion of the kingdom.

At the Quinta de San Jorge we were joined by

General Hay, who assumed the command of the brigade hitherto under the orders of Colonel Barnes.

The French army found the city of Coimbra, as it had previously done Vizeu, perfectly deserted; the houses closed against them; the inhabitants wandering over the face of the country, or crowding the roads leading to Lisbon. This emigration, produced in great measure by the instructions of Lord Wellington, was of incalculable inconvenience to an invading army, moving without magazines, consequently depending for subsistence on the countries through which it advanced. Instead of beholding a large population, subjected to intimidation and reluctant discovery of the stores in their possession, the bare walls of the houses alone remained, while the depositaries of grain, or provisions of any description, fell but unfrequently and accidentally into its power.

The column of march of the allies on the 1st of October presented an extraordinary scene, the varieties of which it is impossible minutely to describe; but when it is explained, that the route was absolutely and continuously covered during its whole extent, some idea may be formed as to its unusual aspect. It was not alone troops of all arms, attended by the encumbrances or followers of an army; it was not pea-

santry, removing with their families; it was not the higher orders of society, travelling conformably to their rank; it was not the furniture, grain, cattle, of an extensive line of country, passing from one station to another,—but it was all these combined, pressing forward in one varied, confused, apparently interminable mass.

On the 2d, Leiria became the head-quarters of the army. General Leith's corps halted at Boa Vista, the following morning passing through the former town, and proceeding to the villages of Carvalho and Carvalhal.

During the progress of depopulation which the country at this period underwent, the friars of the great convent of Batalha deserted their residence; and when General Leith, with the officers of his staff, arrived, one solitary inhabitant was discovered in charge of the building, and the relics of former ages contained within its splendid walls.

Batalha, founded in commemoration of the victory gained at Algiberotti in 1386, by the first John, King of Portugal, is situated in a valley, surrounded by hills covered with wood. These are not of great altitude, but prevent a distant view of the monastery. On being approached, the building is displayed, rising from luxuriant groves of orange trees.

It is of great extent, very irregular, but presenting an exterior both grand and impressive.

The long galleries and spacious cloisters of the convent were now seen under peculiar circumstances; the deep obscurity, the deserted aspect of the building, imparted a melancholy feeling. The silence that prevailed added to the gloom and solitude of the scene. It was only interrupted by the distant sound of voices, which at intervals struck upon the ear, as the British officers, from curiosity, explored the recesses of the building. It could not fail to occur, when wandering through the deserted convent, what a change a few hours had produced; how much the habits and the practice of centuries, with reference to its absent possessors, had been overturned by events with which they were apparently not immediately connected. For hundreds of years the Dominican friars had occupied these walls, only torn from them by death. An even course of monastic life had closed on generations of men, without their existence as a body having been violently assailed. The advance of the French army, combined with the orders of superior civil and military authorities, had, for a time, broken up an establishment, that it appeared nothing but a revolution in the Catholic church, or in the state, was at all likely to endanger.

Families deserting their homes, escaping in confusion and distress, exhibited the devastating influence of war; but the dissolution of a great fraternity such as Batalha, was an impressive instance of the uncertainty of all situations in countries subject to the incursions of an enemy.

Batalha, on the previous day, had been filled with its usual inhabitants, in all the bustle of preparation for departure, uncertain when they might return; equally so as to the fate of the building,—consequently removing, by all possible means, every thing either valuable or portable, except the kingly remains, the swords and armour deposited in the chapel,—these being left to the sacrilegious mercy of the French army.

The interior of the chapel is very chaste and beautiful. In it were exposed to view the remains of John II., King of Portugal. The coffin being open, the embalmed figure was subjected to the inspection and touch of the strangers present. It presented a singular appearance after the lapse of so many years, —the flesh of the face yielding to the pressure of the hand,—the teeth and nails perfect; the skin and flesh had disappeared from the head and other parts of the face. On the cheeks alone did it remain undecayed. Time had not worn or defaced the habili-

ments in which the body had been deposited. Altogether, it had in some respects more the appearance of recent decease than the relic of inanimate mortality for four hundred years. The swords and helmets of the First and Second John were also exhibited by the only remaining brother of the convent, as also the original charter of the monastery. These latter relics were conveyed by General Leith to the San Domingos convent in Lisbon, which many of the fugitive brethren of Batalha had adopted as their temporary residence. Having passed the night of the 3d in the convent, General Leith moved his corps on the following morning, concluding the day's march at the village of Frugiuli, where he halted during the 5th.

The French army, detained by want of provisions, and also by the arrangements necessarily made for establishing its hospitals at Coimbra, did not move from that town and Condeixa until the 5th, when the whole advanced upon Leiria. This delay, added to the previous advantage, as to progress on its route, obtained by the allied army, prevented the troops from suffering during the retreat any harassment, either in the length of marches, or from being pressed by the pursuing enemy. Slight affairs of cavalry alone occurred. These were invariably fa-

vourable to the allies; nor was it until a large proportion of the Prince of Essling's army arrived at Alenquer, that any affair of importance took place. The 2d corps, and the cavalry under General Monbrun, advanced from thence upon Villa Franca, while the 8th took the direction of Sobral. Lord Wellington retired part of his army by the route of Alcobaça and Caldas, by which also a great proportion of the fugitive population approached the capital.

On the 6th, General Leith's corps marched to Quinta de Torres, on the 7th to Ribaldeira. Soon after leaving the former very early in the morning, we for the first time saw the Brunswick Oels regiment, which, on its route to join the army, had bivouac'd on the line of march, a short distance in advance of the Quinta. A dense fog covered the face of the country, dispersing at intervals, so as to make objects discernible when not far removed. The appearance of the Brunswick corps under these circumstances was peculiarly novel and picturesque. The long black clothing of the men,—their schakòs, bearing in front the emblems of mortality,—the waving horse-hair that streamed in the wind, were increased in magnitude and effect by the misty curtain that at times admitted to view these unusually gaunt figures.

At daybreak on the 10th, we marched to the village of Enexara dos Cavalleros. A day of more incessant heavy rain, accompanied by a gale of wind, has seldom been witnessed. The aspect of the country was bleak and dreary. The roads very deep, and the troops confined to quarters, from whence they were little tempted to come forth; for when the soldiers were obliged to face the storm, their own feelings, and the appearance of drenched, miserable-looking passengers, served as an incentive to regain the shelter of their crowded habitations.

On the evening of the 12th, the 8th corps d'armée attacked part of Sir Brent Spencer's division in Sobral. The consequence was, the evacuation of that town by the allies, in rear of which the advanced posts of the 1st division were established. Alenquer became the head-quarters of the French army.

On the 14th the state of the weather had greatly improved. The morning was cloudless, succeeded by a day of bright sunshine. Encouraged by these appearances, and curious to observe the position of the enemy, accompanied by Lord George Grenville, I rode to the advanced posts. We left our horses in the ravine which separated the heights, on which was the position of the allied army, from a rising ground where a breastwork had been thrown up to protect a

post occupied by part of the 71st regiment, and about one hundred and fifty yards removed from which was a French work, constructed of casks, doors, and planks, brought from Sobral. Behind this the enemy's infantry were perceived, but apparently quiet. For some time we continued to observe the different detachments more immediately opposite. Between the breastwork and the temporary redoubt of the enemy, extended a level field, on which neither a tree nor obstruction of any description presented itself. The French soldiers were observed looking from behind the casks, but not a shot was fired by either party.

Our attention was soon after attracted to the road leading from Alenquer into the town of Sobral. A crowd of officers on horseback, detachments of cavalry, dragoons with led horses, and all the cortège of a general-in-chief, appeared upon it. The drums beat; the troops in rear of the village got under arms: still no movement was perceptible in the post to which we were immediately opposed. It was, however, evident that a reconnoissance of some importance was contemplated; nor did it appear probable the troops would be permitted long to continue in their present inactive state.

Marshal Massena, the Duc d'Elchingen, and General Junot, ascended to a height a short distance

to the north of the town, where they dismounted, near a windmill, and became seated, apparently reconnoitring the position opposite. Soon after their arrival, a rocket was fired from the cask redoubt, succeeded by the unmasking of some light guns, which were instantaneously discharged against the breastwork of the 71st.

We had previously been kneeling, looking over the embankment, which was struck near its crest by the shot fired. The British detachment continued protected until after the first musketry discharge of the enemy, on receiving which, the men started up, making a deadly return to the comparatively harmless volley. The French infantry, after this preamble, rushed forward with their usual impetuosity, reaching the embankment unchecked, when the 71st, with Colonel Reynell at their head, springing over the work, not only bayoneted the enemy back to his intrenchment, but drove him from thence into the town. During the progress of this affair, Colonel Cadogan, perceiving the detachment of his regiment engaged, joined it, and was wounded.

The enemy continued to persevere to the right and left of the redoubt from whence he had been repulsed, the nature of the ravine, penetrating to its rear, and in some places covered with wood, admit-

ting the chance of forcing the allies to retire, by operations tending to turn the ground on which they were posted. These manœuvres were effectually checked by the German legion on the right, and the light companies of General Cameron's brigade to the left. The fire of light troops near Sobral continued for some hours, gradually dying away towards evening. On the morning of the 15th, Sir Brent Spencer's division was withdrawn from its advanced situation, and the videttes, or piquets, of the allied army, alone remained assailable without attacking the position itself.

At this period, some gun-boats, manned by the navy, were sent up the Tagus, under the command of Lieutenant Frederick Berkeley. Stationed opposite to Alhandra, firing in all directions wherever an enemy appeared, they harassed and annoyed the parties sent either to reconnoitre or to occupy the villages on the right bank of the river. An accidental shot from one of them killed General St Croix in the act of descending into a road apparently protected from the effects of the cannonade, but where he was nearly cut in two by a recochèt ball. On many occasions distinguished for his bravery and address, he was much regretted by the French army.

The first position of the enemy, when established

in front of the lines, was as follows:—The 2d corps d'armée was placed a short distance in rear of Villa Franca, having its left on the Tagus, with its right extending towards Arruda; a brigade of light cavalry was posted at Porte de Mugem to keep up the communication with Santarem. General Monbrun, with most of the cavalry, was on the Zezere, watching the motions of the garrison of Abrantes, and protecting the rear of the army. The head-quarters continued at Alenquer. The 6th corps was in position at Otta, with the exception of the division Loison, which, placed on the road between Alenquer and Sobral, kept up the communication between General Reynier and the Duke of Abrantes. The brigade of dragoons attached to the 8th corps was placed to the right of Caxieras, observing the numerous routes leading from Alenquer to Torres Vedras, and from the latter to Villa Franca, by Sobral and Arruda. The division of General Solignac was placed rather more to the left, for the purpose of threatening the valley of Arruda. The videttes and advanced posts were close to those of the allies, while along the whole extent of the position, from Sobral to the Tagus, beacons were erected by the French army. On the 7th of October, only two days after the departure of the French Marshal from Coimbra,

Colonel Trant, with a force of Portuguese militia, entered that town, capturing the enemy's hospitals, containing 5000 sick or wounded.

The large body of troops employed in the invasion of Portugal having, of course, weakened the already shaken French domination in Spain, it became unsafe for the corps of Marshal the Duke of Treviso to continue in the country which it had for some time occupied, in communication with, and supported by, General Reynier. He therefore retired from Zafra and Los Santos, crossed the Sierra Morena, forming a junction with the army of the south, commanded by Marshal Soult, and holding in subjection the kingdoms of Andalusia. In this movement, Marshal Mortier was followed by General Ballesteros, who advanced to the neighbourhood of Castillo de las Guardias. At the same time, the Marques de la Romana marched from Spanish Estremadura by Alemtejo, to reinforce Lord Wellington. The leading division of his army, under General Carlos O'Donnell, crossing the Tagus on the morning of the 14th, arrived on that day at Cabeça de Montachique.

Reinforcements having arrived from England, Lord Wellington altered the formation of his army, to which two divisions of infantry were now added.

The corps hitherto commanded by General Leith, formed principally of Portuguese, was broken up, and the 5th division, composed of the brigades of Generals Hay and Dunlop, with the Portuguese troops of General Spry, placed under his orders.

The British regiments of this division were, the Royal, 4th, 9th, 30th, 38th, and 44th.

The 3d and 15th Portuguese infantry of the line and 8th Caçedores formed the brigade of General Spry. To each of the British brigades of this division was attached a company of the Brunswick Oels corps.

The fortified positions to cover Lisbon, and, in the event of necessity, protect the embarkation of the army, were commenced in the autumn of 1809. The plan originated with Lord Wellington: the execution of it was intrusted to Colonel Fletcher, and the British engineer officers then in Portugal.

These lines, so celebrated under the denomination of Torres Vedras—so influential in the circumstances of the war—so justly calculated to raise the military reputation of the Commander of the forces, and to prove the scientific acquirement, the deep practical knowledge, of the officers employed in completing them, must ever be considered as the noblest specimen of a fortified position rendered perfect by

human art,—disproving at once the previously received opinion, strengthened by the experience of other times, against the possibility of rendering such ground defensible, when assailed by unfettered and concentrated attack.

In giving a brief account of the lines in front of Lisbon, I must state, that the detail is not derived solely from defective personal observation, but is sanctioned by the authority of an officer eminently qualified to give a just representation of their varied defences.

In order to give some idea of the natural means of defence, or of communication, it is necessary to explain, that the Peninsula, at whose south-eastern extremity Lisbon is situated, is crossed by two sierras, extending, with various altitudes and abruptness, but with partial interruptions, from the Atlantic to the Tagus. Through the passes in these mountains, and the low ground bordering the Tagus, four roads from the interior to the capital are conducted, namely, by Mafra, Montachique, Bucellas, and near to Alhandra. These sierras run nearly parallel, at a distance of from six to nine miles; the point of the line nearest to Lisbon being close to the Tagus, between Via Longa and Quintella. Of these lines of defence the most complete, the least

subjected to the dangerous effects of flank movements, as well as the most continuous in its inaccessible features, and uninterrupted capability of defence, is that nearest the capital, or the second line, as it has been generally denominated, extending from the village of Ribamar, near the mouth of the Rio Lorenzo, to the pass of Mafra—from thence to the Cabeça de Montachique, then to the steep and formidable pass of Bucellas, having to its right the Sierra de Serves, descending precipitously into the plain, at a distance of two miles and a half from the Tagus. The latter space appeared the only vulnerable part of this formidable position. To it the attention of the executive officers was particularly directed, every means which art could devise being adopted to strengthen any point that presented the slightest capability of being converted into an obstacle to the enemy's progress.

In front of Via Longa, upon an eminence rising from the plain at a short distance from the river, six redoubts were constructed, so situated, in consequence of the nearly circular formation of the plateau, as to command the approaches in every direction within range of their artillery. Three of these immediately domineered the great route from Alhandra to Lisbon, to the right of which, upon a

knoll, in front of the town of Povoa, another work was formed, sweeping the communication in the direction of Quintella. On the bank of the Tagus, a redoubt, armed with four twelve-pounders, terminated the line at its eastern extremity. Fifty-nine redoubts, containing 232 pieces of cannon, estimated to require 17,500 men to garrison them, protected the weaker points, enfiladed the roads, or swept the ascent to the escarped mountains in the range of this extended position, occupying a front of twenty-two miles.

The front line, and that on which the allied army was placed subsequently to the battle of Busaco, was first intended more as one of isolated posts capable of protracted defence, some of which must have been forced before the main position could have been assailed, than, as it afterwards became, an uninterrupted extent of strengthened ground, sufficiently formidable to induce Lord Wellington there to receive the expected attack of the French army. The left of this chain rested on the Atlantic, at the mouth of the Rio Zizandra, which holds its course parallel to, and a short distance in front of, the position between Torres Vedras and the sea. From Torres Vedras, for seven miles in rear of the valley of Runa, and extending towards Monte Agraça, was the weak-

est part of this line. There the exertions of the British engineers were unceasingly directed in aid of the natural defences, and to render the country in all respects as impracticable as possible for an invading army.

On the sierra of Monte Agraça, in rear of Sobral, was constructed a redoubt of great magnitude, armed with twenty-five pieces of artillery, and prepared for the garrison of a thousand men. This formidable work, from its commanding and centrical situation, was the constant daily resort of Lord Wellington. There he came every morning, and continued until it was ascertained that no hostile movement had taken place, and until light permitted a reconnoissance of the enemy's troops encamped opposite. From the redoubt on Monte Agraça, the line continued, crossing the valleys of Arruda, and Calhandriz, until it rested on the Tagus at Alhandra.

Nature and art had rendered the ground from Calhandriz to the river particularly strong; but to make the defences still more formidable, and to form an intermediate obstruction, redoubts were thrown up extending to the rear, nearly at right angles with the front line. These swept the whole portion of the valley by which a column of infantry must penetrate, even had it succeeded in forcing an en-

trance into the ravine. Sixty-nine works of different descriptions fortified this line; in these were mounted three hundred and nineteen pieces of artillery; the troops required to garrison them were upwards of 18,000 men; and the extent, in a direct line from flank to flank, twenty-five miles.

In the progress of constructing these very numerous, varied, and complicated defences, Colonel Fletcher, the chief engineer, was removed to the head-quarters of the army then on the frontier, where his services were deemed essential: consequently, on the 6th of July, 1810, the command of the department in the lines devolved upon Captain J. T. Jones, to whom is justly to be ascribed the merit, not only of perfecting the previously traced out or contemplated works, but of having suggested and completed many of the most scientific, useful, and laborious obstructions during the extent of this stupendous barrier. Of these, as an example, may be cited the gigantic work of escarping the mountain near Alhandra for a connected distance of nearly two miles, rendering its crest an impenetrable curtain, presenting a natural wall from fifteen to eighteen feet in altitude, not reducible by human assault.

In the line occupied by the allied army, and in front of which the enemy abandoned all hopes of

success, Captain Jones had ample scope for his scientific and indefatigably zealous exertion: As above stated, this position was in the previous design neither so connected, nor so generally strengthened, as that of Mafra and Bucellas; but when the army arrived from Busaco, it had become, although not perfect, a continuous line of support, daily gaining strength from the unremitted exertion of the engineers, assisted by the labours of the troops.

It has by some persons been erroneously supposed, that the regular army was, in the event of attack, to occupy the redoubts, and other works in the lines, or, at all events, that a large proportion of the troops would of necessity defend these temporary fortifications. In the calculation of probable circumstances, no British soldiers, with the exception of artillery, would have acted within their walls. Some Portuguese infantry, with the militia and ordonanza, were destined to compose the garrisons; while the whole allied army, numerous, brilliant in equipment, high in spirit, confident in its great commander, was prepared to move in every direction, to cover the summits of mountains, to descend into valleys, or to pour in torrents on any luckless column that, with diminished numbers, might have forced past the almost impenetrable obstacles of this grand position.

It is neither chimerical to advance, nor inconsistent with reality to believe, that the battle of Busaco saved the French army. Had it not been fought, the Prince of Essling must have attacked the lines; and where is the person in either army that could now candidly doubt the result of such an attempt? When I say, must have attacked, it does not appear incredible that the same energy, equal confidence, and the same bravery, that could imagine, or execute, the attack at Busaco, would have made a fruitless attempt of a more fatal description in front of Lisbon, had it not been for the salutary lesson received upon the Sierra de Alcoba.

In addition to the works thrown up in either line, or in the intervening points of communication, rivers were obstructed in their course, flooding the valleys, and rendering the country swampy and impassable; trenches were cut from whence infantry, perfectly protected, might fire on the advancing columns of an enemy, these being also flanked by artillery, sweeping the approaches to them in every direction. Mountains were scarped as above stated; abattis of the most formidable description, either closed the entrance to ravines, impeded an approach to the works, or blocked up roads in which deep cuts were also marked out for excavation; routes conducting

from the front were rendered impracticable; others within the lines, either repaired, or formed to facilitate communication, to admit the passage of artillery, or reduce the distance by which the troops had to move for the purposes of concentration or resistance; bridges were mined, and prepared for explosion.

Telegraphs, erected at Alhandra, Monte Agraça, Socorra, Torres Vedras, and in rear of Ponte de Rol, rapidly communicated information from one extremity of the line to the other. These signal stations were in charge of seamen from the fleet in the Tagus, under the command of Lieutenant Leith of the Barfleur. To complete the barriers, palisades, platforms, and planked bridges, leading into the works, fifty thousand trees were placed at the disposal of the engineer department, during the three months ending on the 7th of October 1810.

The cannon in the works were supplied by the Portuguese Government. Cars, drawn by oxen, transported twelve-pounders where wheels had never previously rolled. Above 3000 officers and artillerymen of the country assisted in arming the redoubts, and were variously employed in the lines. At one period, exclusive of these, of the British engineers, artificers, or infantry soldiers, seven thousand peasantry worked as labourers in the completion of an

undertaking only to have been accomplished under the most favourable circumstances, both with regard to cordiality of assistance, neighbouring arsenals, a British fleet in the Tagus, constant uninterrupted communication with a great capital, a regular remuneration to the labourers, an anxious and deep interest in the exclusion to be accomplished by the assistance of the works in progress, and, above all, an intelligence and firmness in command, that could at the same time extract the greatest benefits from these combinations, and urge exertion where it appeared to relax.

The allied army, on arriving in the lines, was placed as follows:

In the great redoubt on Monte Agraça was stationed General Pack, with his brigade of Portuguese infantry. The fifth division, under General Leith, was encamped on the reverse of the heights directly in rear of that work. General Hill's corps occupied the position of Alhandra; to its left, the light division, commanded by General Crauford, extended through Arruda, to Monte Agraça. The first, fourth, and sixth divisions, under Sir Brent Spencer, Generals Cole and Campbell, were at Zibriera, Ribaldiera, and Runa; their right being in contact with General Leith, and their left with General Picton, who, with

the third division, occupied Torres Vedras, and guarded the line of the Zizandra.

The cavalry were stationed at Mafra on the second line, and in the villages to the extreme left of the position, where, or in the intermediate space, they could alone be serviceable in the event of attack. The Spanish corps of the Marques de la Romana was stationed at Enexara dos Cavalleros.

The works had received their garrisons, stores, and ammunition; districts were formed under the separate charge of the engineer officers; guides were attached to the divisions of the army,—every thing was in the highest state of preparation to receive the enemy, whose advance was day after day anxiously expected. That these expectations were destined never to be fulfilled, will be recorded as a lasting memorial of the military knowledge and sound judgment of Marshal Massena, more worthy of his reputation as a general, than any previous or subsequent event that occurred during the campaign.

It is stated by Colonel Jones, and was believed at the time, that the Duke of Abrantes urged the general-in-chief to permit him, with a division of his corps, to assault the great redoubt of Sobral before day-break. Had he done so, the first encounter would have been with General Pack, an officer equally brave

and determined; nor could he have been more than momentarily engaged with him when the fifth division would have crowned the summit of the ridge, and ensured, not his discomfiture only, but, in all probability, the annihilation of the attacking column.

During the period of the French army continuing in the immediate front of the lines, the allies were invariably under arms every morning long before daybreak. Frequently in the course of the first ten days dense fogs prevailed, rendering objects at any distance imperceptible, until the mist dispelled, which it usually did, gradually, after sunrise. On these occasions, Lord Wellington remained in the redoubt on Monte Agraça receiving the reports of the night, by sound alone enabled to judge whether the enemy was moving in advance. The few musketry shots sometimes heard early in the morning, proceeding from the French piquets feeling their way in the mist, occasioned some degree of anxiety to ascertain whether the firing continued, or assumed a more serious noise. This never was the case; nor was there the slightest attempt made to assail any of the works, or an endeavour to penetrate the line during the wide extent of its range.

Deserters arrived daily from the enemy's alignement, reporting the distress and scarcity which

therein prevailed; and it being now evident that the Prince of Essling would not attack the allies, the period of his departure became the only matter of speculation. At length, urged by necessity, on the morning of the 14th November the enemy broke up from his encampments in the immediate front of the allied army. The huts in which the French army had endured inactivity, disappointment, disease, inclement weather, and every species of privation, were deserted. Marshal Massena, compelled by the state of his army, retired from a position, the occupation of which, for such a length of time, without the possible chance of circumstances becoming more favourable, can never, on any sound military principle, be defended.

On arriving in front of the position, of the natural or artificial strength of which he was probably in perfect ignorance, he must at once have become convinced of the defensive intentions of Lord Wellington, and the means he possessed of carrying them into terrible effect. Having ascertained this fact, no satisfactory reason can be assigned for bivouacing in the months of October and November, close to an army which he very properly had not the temerity to attack.

In reverting to the conduct of the Prince of Essling,

it may be urged that he had expectations of being reinforced to an extent warranting an attempt to force the intrenched position of the allies. Subsequent events proved this to have been out of the question.

It may also be questioned, whether change of position, having for its object an endeavour to turn or endanger the fortified camp of his opponent, might not have afforded reason for delay. Nothing of the kind was attempted. The French army continued in a state of apathy and inactivity; the posts were relieved, but no other indication of military movement, no disturbance of any description, varied the monotonous daylight observation of one army, or the listless inaction of the other. Military annals do not record a greater contrast in the real situation of two hostile armies, close to each other, but unwilling to engage, than was exhibited in front of the capital of Portugal.

The allies, abundantly supplied in every respect, receiving provisions, clothing, and money from Lisbon, reinforced daily either by newly-arrived troops, or convalescents from the medical depots. Secure and confident in their position, having the recollections of Busaco to inspire them with every rational hope as to the possible result of an attack in their

present situation, were buoyant in spirit. On the other part, was an army pressed forward without reference to the principles of tactic, defeated in its first encounter, which the natural arrogance of the Imperial troops attributed more to the nature of the position, than to the firmness of the people by whom it was defended. This impression, however soothing it might have been between Coimbra and Sobral, must have vanished when a still more formidable line of country presented itself, on which they had to encounter the same battalions. To this primary reverse attending the advance of Marshal Massena's army are to be added, the difficulties occasioned by the absence of magazines in an enemy's country, the exposure to cold, damp, rainy weather—to the progress of disease, but above all, the feeling produced on minds no longer occupied with hopes of glory, or dreams of plunder. These had all vanished: desertion became frequent; and Lisbon, more distant from their grasp, less likely to be subjected to their spoliation, than when the march commenced from Almeida.

Lord Wellington, having ascertained the nature of the retrograde movement made on the 14th, advanced his troops on the track of the French army. Sir William Erskine's brigade of the 1st division passed through Sobral on the 15th. The only hu-

man being remaining in that town was a wounded soldier of the 71st British regiment. On the 16th, the 5th division marched in advance. The whole of the 1st division, General Pack's Portuguese brigade, and the light division, were already on the route to Santarem. Unfortunately for the operations of the army, the weather had become more than usually boisterous and inclement; the rain fell incessantly, rendering the roads, already injured by the passage of the enemy's army, rough, deep, and all but impracticable.

On the 18th, the fifth division marched to Alenquer. The condition in which we found the town, left not a doubt that the enemy had completed its demolition out of pure wantonness. It is not to be supposed, that the state in which we found it was the same wherein the head-quarters of Marshal Massena had been satisfied to reside during the preceding month. General Leith inhabited what had been the quarters of the general-in-chief, left in a most dilapidated and disgraceful state. The enemy owed us some dislike for the discomforts to which depopulating the country had subjected him; but there could be no excuse for this pitiful mode of venting ill humour, held in contempt by those against whom it was directed, and proceeding, of course, from the

soldiers alone, was a reproach to the discipline of the army to which they belonged.

On the 19th, we marched through Azambuja, left in a state of ruin not inferior to the other unfortunate towns on the route. The houses in many instances were unroofed, doors and windows burnt, the interiors as uninhabitable as malignity or ingenuity could make them. In the evening the division arrived at Cartaxo. In the course of this day we met some hundreds of prisoners taken by the leading divisions of the army. The appearance of these men was wretched in the extreme. Disease and want had reduced them to a state of exhaustion and weakness, rendering them incapable of supporting the fatigues of a lengthened march, commenced with barely sufficient physical power to attempt the exertion.

Lord Wellington had intended to dislodge the enemy from his position at Santarem, on the 19th; but his arrangements not being completed, in consequence of delay in the arrival of some artillery destined to support the attack made by General Pack, the whole operation was postponed until the following morning, when the fifth division received orders to participate in the service.

Before detailing the offensive movements contem-

plated by Lord Wellington, it is important to explain the change that had occurred in the position of the French army.

When the Prince of Essling determined on retiring to Santarem, the line of the Zezere, and Thomar, he commenced by ordering the sixth corps to break up from Otta. Marshal Ney fixed his head-quarters at Thomar, with the left of his corps d'armée near the Zezere,—his right being beyond Ourem. General Loison occupied Golegao with his division and a brigade of dragoons. General Monbrun marched with most of the cavalry to the neighbourhood of Leiria. Torres Novas became the head-quarters. The hospitals and civil departments of the army moved to Santarem.

The eighth corps marched soon after dark on the evening of the 14th. At 7 o'clock, General Clausell removed the posts along the line, assembling his division at Sobral, from whence he took the route conducting to Alenquer.

General Solignac, at the same hour, collected his posts, forming his division in close columns on the plateau, domineering the valley of Arruda. The brigade of General Ferret was ordered not to move in retreat until the whole of General Junot's corps

had passed the defile leading to Alenquer. A brigade of cavalry closed the line of march.

On the 17th, the eighth corps marched to Pernes, while that of General Reynier continued in position on the formidable heights of Santarem.

The town of Santarem is encircled by plains, through which the Rio Mayor, and other minor streams, flow into the Tagus. To the south, the town is elevated on ground rising precipitously from the Tagus; in all other directions it is alone approachable through morasses, rendered additionally difficult by the overflowing of the rivulets intersecting them.

The route from Cartaxo crosses the Rio Mayor near to Santarem, the bridge being approached in either direction by a walled causeway, leading through the swampy ground upon its banks, elevated several feet above the level of the plain, and 400 toises in length. Behind a strong abattis, formed of large trees placed across the road, was stationed the advanced post of the second corps; a rising ground, close to the extremity of the causeway, on the Santarem side, was armed with artillery, commanding its whole extent; the approach to the position was further defended by intrenchments, and trees cut down, rendering it extremely difficult of access. General Reynier considered his position so

formidable, that he did not deem it important to destroy the bridge.

Notwithstanding these serious appearances, Lord Wellington seemed determined to attack the second corps on the morning of the 20th. General Hay's brigade of the 5th division, with General Pack's Portuguese brigade, were ordered to ford the Rio Mayor above the town, turn the enemy's right, drive in his posts, and advance until established on the heights, there to await for subsequent orders. The 1st division, under Sir Brent Spencer, and two brigades of the 5th, commanded by General Leith, were to proceed in columns along the causeway, until across the river; then to quit the road, leap the wall to its left, and having formed on the plain, march direct to the enemy. The light division to force across the Rio Mayor, near to its junction with the Tagus, and, with a brigade of light cavalry, manœuvre on the enemy's left flank.

Before daybreak we marched to carry into execution these movements. It had rained constantly during the night; the roads were deep to a degree. As the divisions approached the high ground on the right bank of the Rio Mayor, the weather improved, the rain ceased to be violent; the troops halted on the eminence domineering the western extremity of

the causeway, from whence every preparation for defence made by the enemy was clearly discernible.

The demonstrations made by the allies alarmed General Reynier, notwithstanding his previously established confidence in the strength of his position. The troops under Generals Hay and Pack appeared marching to carry into execution what he most dreaded, an attack on his right flank. In ignorance as to the means possessed by these officers of crossing the Rio Mayor, he was unaware of the security afforded by the accidental flooding of the river, which, against a corps unprovided with pontoons or apparatus for constructing a bridge, presented a sufficient obstacle. The force in his immediate front, apparently on the eve of debouching to carry the bridge, had a formidable appearance; while the light division defiled along the bank of the Tagus. General Clausell's division of the 8th corps, the nearest infantry with whom he could communicate, was four leagues distant. Under all these circumstances, General Reynier prepared for retreat: the sick, the wounded, and the equipages, were sent to Golegao; he at the same time dispatched information to the Duke of Abrantes, and the general-in-chief, as to the critical nature of his situation.

The 1st and 5th divisions of the allied army,

Drawn by Major Leith Hay *Engd by W.H.Lizars*

PUNHETE FROM THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE TAGUS.

Edinburgh Published by D. Lizars & Whittaker & Co.t London Nov.t 1830.

crowning the heights as above stated, remained in anxious suspense, expecting every moment to hear the troops to their left engaged. The enemy appeared equally intent in watching the progress of events; but nothing was destined to result from what had every semblance of being the immediate prelude to a very serious contest. The causeway could not have been forced without great loss; nor was it possible for Lord Wellington to ascertain so immediately the exact position of the remainder of the French army as to judge how far it was practicable to dislodge the 2d corps by flank movements alone. Conjecture was, however, at an end, upon the abandonment of all intention to attack being communicated. General Hay's brigade rejoined the division, which retired to Cartaxo, where General Cameron's brigade, with the German Legion, were also quartered for the night.

During these operations, in consequence of the enemy having re-established a bridge over the Zezere at Punhete, General Hill's corps was passed across the Tagus at Villada, by the boats of the fleet at Lisbon. The possibility of the French army obtaining supplies from the Alemtejo was thus effectually counteracted.

The 5th division marched from Cartaxo on the

morning of the 23d, adopting a route to its right of the great road to Lisbon; and being quartered for the night in the villages of Aveiro de Baxo, nd De Cima. We inhabited the Quinta of the Condes de Aveiro—a large house, situated in a valley, surrounded by all the neglected luxuriance of Portuguese scenery. The French had bestowed an unusual degree of violence upon the unfortunate Quinta; not a window in the spacious building was left in a perfect state; refining in mischief, the sashes had been thrown open to reduce the consumption of labour or of time in completing the work of destruction.

On the 24th, the division moved to Alcoentre. The French army now occupied a portion of the territory best calculated to supply its wants; the valley of Galegao, that of Thomar, and on the right bank of the Zezere, being not only one of the most fertile parts of the kingdom, but in those districts the system of emigration and removing property had not been so generally or systematically carried into effect, as on the line nearer the coast, by which the enemy had advanced after the battle of Busaco.

Possessing this district from whence to derive his supplies, Marshal Massena subsisted his army by means of its own exertions in procuring food; a system of foraging was established with great care as

to detail, and carried into practice not in one direction alone, but over the whole extent of country in rear of his cantonments. As the grain and cattle of the nearer districts became exhausted, the daily marches of the detachments were of course more extended and more harassing, occasioning irregularity in the supply of food; while the soldiers, subjected to constant fatigues, suffered from a season of itself calculated to produce aguish complaints, and to engender sickness; the effective strength of the army rapidly diminished, nor did there appear any immediate prospect of reinforcement or relief. The communications of the French General, either with Spain or France, were effectually obstructed, leaving him in ignorance as to the progress of events, or the wishes of the Emperor on the future conduct of a campaign now proceeding under very different prospects from those he had been induced to anticipate.

Early in December, General Gardanne, with a large convoy of clothing and provisions, escorted by 3000 infantry, with three squadrons of cavalry, entered Portugal, for the purpose of conveying these supplies to the army of the Prince of Essling. Having penetrated to Cardigos, within three leagues of being in communication with the French troops on

the Zezere, he, from some inexplicable cause, became alarmed, retraced his steps, and returned into Spain, pursued by the militia and ordinanza.

During the month of December slight variation occurred, either in the position of the armies, or the nature of the war; the only occasions on which the troops came in contact, resulting from efforts made to obstruct the foraging parties sent from the right of the enemy's line into the country in front of Obidos.

In upwards of twenty slight affairs, Captain Fenwick, of the Portuguese service, had from Obidos harassed, defeated, and captured parties of the enemy, in all of which he had exhibited a combination of enterprise, gallantry, and judgment. Having, with eighty militia of the garrison under his orders, attacked a similar number of French grenadiers at a village near to Alcobaça, he was mortally wounded when in pursuit of the flying enemy. To have been so frequently and invariably successful in the command of Portuguese militia, against French troops, even in minor affairs, was a proof of no ordinary military talent.

In consequence of the report made by General Foy, who had been sent to Paris soon after the arrival of the army at Alenquer, General Drouèt,

with the 9th corps d'armée, was ordered to make a reconnoissance, penetrate into Portugal until in communication with Marshal Massena, ascertain the state of his army, and, having accomplished this service, return to the Spanish frontier. General Drouèt, having left his cavalry in the neighbourhood of Almeida, and one division of his corps, under General Claparède, at Guarda, advanced with the other, and the division of General Gardanne, by Ponte de Murcella, upon Pombal, where he communicated with the right of the French army. This march for a time disencumbered the flank and rear of the enemy of militia detachments, that had previously occasioned great inquietude and annoyance, but who were, of course, unequal to a contest with 10,000 regular infantry.

The French Marshal prevented General Drouèt from retracing his steps, and prevailed upon him, until dispatches were received from Paris, to continue as a reinforcement to the army of Portugal. He consequently placed the troops under his orders at Leiria, thus strengthening and extending the right of the enemy's line; after which he moved to the left, and was cantoned on the banks of the Tagus. The arrival of this reinforcement, the certainty of the enemy having constructed bridge equipages at Punhete,

for the purpose of passing the Tagus, and the advance of Marshals Soult and Mortier, with the disposable force, from Andalusia on the Guadiana, were all calculated to create uneasiness at the allied head-quarters.

The general of artillery, Eblé, had with great exertion completed upwards of a hundred and fifty pontoons, with all the necessary apparatus for constructing two bridges across the Tagus, having already placed one over the Zezere at Punhete, and another at Martinchel. At this period the allied army was cantoned as follows:—The head-quarters, with the guards, and General Cameron's brigade, occupied Cartaxo; the German Legion, Aveiro de Baxo; Sir William Erskine's brigade, Alcontrinha; General Picton's division, Alcoentre; General Leith's, Torres Vedras; General Cole's, Azambuja; General Campbell's, Alenquer; and the cavalry extended in advance, or to the left of the position.

On the 19th of January, the Duke of Abrantes, at the head of five thousand infantry, and three hundred cavalry, left Alcanhede, at five in the morning, marching direct upon Rio Mayor, through which town he drove the allied piquets. This reconnoissance was made under an impression that a large force had been collected at, or near, Alcoentre,

for the purpose of debouching on the right of the French army; upon ascertaining that the information received was erroneous, the troops returned to their cantonments, the only result being the dangerous wound received by the general-in-chief of the 8th corps. The Duke of Abrantes, having advanced to an eminence in front of his light troops, that he might more narrowly inspect the position or force of the allies, was fired at by the retiring videttes, and seriously wounded. A carbine ball fractured the bridge of his nose, close to the forehead, lodging in the right cheek bone, from whence it was extracted on the following day.

On the 23d, the Marques de la Romana died at Cartaxo; the last act of his military life was, detaching the troops under his orders for the purpose of endeavouring to check the operations of the Duke of Dalmatia in Spanish Estremadura. General Mendizabal was intrusted with the conduct of this service; in the execution of which he gave unquestionable proofs of perfect incapacity. He had for some time been manœuvring in the country on the left bank of the Guadiana, and to reinforce him the Spanish infantry from the Tagus were directed.

On the 30th of January, Marshal Soult commenced the siege of Badajos, by opening a parallel

against the Pardaleras, one of its outworks. The Spanish garrison, being accidentally under the orders of a man of firmness and energy, prepared for a vigorous defence; nor did it appear doubtful that a considerable delay must be occasioned, as well as loss to the enemy, before he obtained possession of so strong a fortress. The Duke of Treviso conducted the siege, which was urged with all possible dispatch, but received a partial interruption from a sortie made by the garrison on the 3d of February. Two thousand infantry, with three squadrons of cavalry, forcing back the workmen and guard of the trenches, filled in twelve toises of the parallel; this was, however, soon repaired, and on the evening of the 11th, the Pardaleras was carried by assault.

General Mendizabal, having encamped on the right bank of the Gebora, with his left flank protected by Fort San Christoval, watched the progress of the siege. From this very favourable position he was unfortunately induced to move, by a fire of shells from the enemy's works on the opposite side of the Guadiana. Thus, to escape a minor inconvenience, abandoning the safeguard of the fort, and marching to his left, where the flooded state of the rivers alone protected him. For some days they were impassable;

but on the waters subsiding, Marshal Soult determined to strike a blow against a force he neither dreaded, nor, upon military principles, could disregard. On the night of the 18th, the French troops marched, forded both rivers, overthrew the Spanish army, capturing its artillery, camp equipage, and baggage; no rout could be more complete; the whole were either killed, taken, or dispersed, the fugitives alone obtaining shelter within the walls of Badajos or Elvas. Don Carlos de España on this, as on all similar occasions, distinguished himself; to his gallantry and exertion may be attributed the escape of any portion of this ill-fated force, with the exception of General Madden's brigade of Portuguese cavalry, acting with the Spanish army, which also left the field in a creditable state of formation, considering the ruin, havock, and dispersion that surrounded it in every direction.

The tardy progress of the siege of Badajos, under circumstances that made its speedy reduction a matter of deep interest to the French marshals, proved the determined defence of the governor; the month of February passed without any immediate prospect of its fall. Unfortunately, one of those accidents occurred which, in war, are so frequently influential. General Menacho was killed by a cannon shot in

the act of observing the effect of a sortie. The command of the garrison, in consequence of this much to be lamented event, devolved upon General Imaz, a weak, irresolute man. The alteration in the energetic nature of the defence became immediately perceptible, and the day following that on which the breaching battery opened, the place surrendered, fortunately, however, not until after reinforcements, to the amount of seven thousand men, had arrived in the Tagus from England, and the Prince of Essling commenced his retreat.

The animating service that succeeded the decided movement in retreat of the enemy's army, I was not destined to witness, nor shall attempt to describe events in which, unfortunately, we did not participate, and that have been so frequently detailed by persons more competent to relate with accuracy what there occurred. The illness of General Leith occasioned his return to England previous to any indication of the Prince of Essling's serious intention to abandon the Portuguese territory. The Gorgon, of fifty guns, conveyed Sir Stapleton Cotton, Generals Leith and Colman, Lord Tweeddale, Lord James Hay, Captain Dudley, and the author of this narrative, from the shores of the Peninsula.

CHAPTER IV.

THE successful and admirably conducted attack made by Lord Wellington upon Cuidad Rodrigo having terminated on the night of the 19th of January, 1812, the 5th division, (again under General Leith,) which had not been engaged in the active prosecution of the siege, was ordered to march into the town, and undertake the work of repairing its defences.

The reduction of the place had been effected under disadvantages of an extremely stormy and boisterous season; but from the judicious nature of arrangements made for attack, the promptitude and foresight of the British general, the exertions of the engineers, and the bravery of the troops, possession of it was obtained without a single obstruction to the regular progress of the approaches, without a very severe loss of life, and in so brief a space of time, that all attempts at relief meditated by the French generals were rendered abortive.

It was in the act of debouching from the suburb of San Francisco to mount the breach at the head of the light division, that General Robert Crauford was mortally wounded. In him the army sustained a severe loss: stern and rigid in his notions of military duty, unrelaxing in the exaction of strictly observed discipline, those qualities were directed by a perfect knowledge of his profession, not in the minor details only, but in the more extensive and more difficult acquirements of scientific information, or sound practical judgment. His personal gallantry on every occasion inspired confidence. If an error existed in his character as a soldier, it proceeded from a too ardent desire to be in constant contact with the enemy.

No sooner had Cuidad Rodrigo fallen, than Lord Wellington determined to reduce Badajos. Unremitted exertions were consequently made to complete the repairs of the former: the trenches were filled in, breaches closed up, works constructed to prevent the approach of an enemy by the upper Teson, and every thing arranged to check the progress of Marshal Marmont, who had assembled a powerful army at Salamanca.

The works of Almeida being also in some degree restored, that fortress was provisioned and garrisoned. Thus the two frontier places again presented

obstructions to an army invading Portugal by the province of Beira, and the battering train of the French army had been captured in Cuidad Rodrigo.

On the 6th of March, the army moved in the direction of the Tagus; the 5th division, with some light cavalry, alone remaining on the banks of the Agueda. Precautions were taken to deceive the enemy as to the march of the allies; but the preparations for such an undertaking as that in contemplation could not be carried on without some degree of publicity. The consequence was, that the governor, General Phillipon, communicated to Marshal Soult the prospect of an immediate siege. Lord Wellington moved rapidly to the scene of a still more important triumph than that recently achieved. He arrived at Elvas on the 11th, and on the 16th Badajos was invested by the 3d division, under General Picton, the 4th, commanded by the Honourable General Colville, and the light division, under the temporary command of Colonel Barnard. Two corps of observation were placed in advance. The one, composed of the 1st, 6th, and 7th divisions, with two brigades of cavalry, was commanded by Sir Thomas Graham; it advanced to Zafra and Llerena. The other, under General Hill, formed of the 2d division, the Portuguese division of General Hamilton,

and one brigade of cavalry, was on the Guadiana, between Merida and Almendralejo.

The nearest of the enemy's troops at this time without the walls of Badajos, was the corps of General Drouèt, belonging to the army of the south, which, at the period of Sir Thomas Graham's advance, occupied Villa Franca de los Barros, and Los Santos, but immediately after retired to Hornachos.

The weather, from the commencement of this important siege, was extremely unfavourable; rain fell in torrents, not only occasioning difficulty and delay in the formation of the trenches and erection of the batteries, but adding to the hardships endured by the troops, necessarily, on such a service, exposed without shelter to the inclemency of the season.

The 5th division having arrived from the vicinity of Cuidad Rodrigo, completed the investment on the right bank of the Guadiana on the 22d of March. During the evening of that day, the river became so flooded as to carry away the pontoon bridge, and the current being at the same time sufficiently violent to obstruct the passage of the boats forming the flying bridge, this was likely to become a serious, if not insurmountable inconvenience, the supplies of ammunition and provisions being exclusively obtained by these communications. Fortunately the fall of the

river again permitted the repair of the bridge, and the siege proceeded without farther interruption.

On the 24th, the 5th division invested Fort San Christoval. On the 25th, the batteries, armed with twenty-eight pieces of ordnance, opened against Fort Picurina, the Lunette of San Roque, and to enfilade the bastions of La Trinidad and San Pedro. After it became dark, General Kempt, commanding in the trenches, carried Fort Picurina by storm. Three detachments from the troops of the 3d division assailed the work; the garrison made a vigorous defence, but the column led by Captain Holloway of the engineers, and commanded by Captain Powis of the 83d regiment, succeeded in forcing an entrance by escalade. The other detachments subsequently gained the rampart, and the enemy's troops were either bayoneted or made prisoners. Captain Powis was mortally wounded on the parapet of the work.

Marshal Soult tardily moved to re-act the same part he had performed during the progress of the siege in 1811, which terminated so unprofitably for all parties in the bloodiest of fields, that of Albuhera. On the present occasion, he advanced from Seville to Llerena, concentrating his troops, and marched with the evident purpose of endeavouring to raise the siege. In conformity to the preconcerted ar-

rangements of the commander of the forces, Sir Thomas Graham retired before this superior force. Sir Rowland Hill's corps also fell back upon Talavera la Real, after having exploded the centre arches of the bridge over the Guadiana at Merida.

The labours of the troops, notwithstanding the heavy rains which fell during nearly the whole progress of the siege, were unremitting. Obstacles of every description yielded to the zeal and determination exhibited in all departments of the service. The consequence was, that, in an unusually short space of time, the breaches in the main body of the place were considered practicable. That the assault would have been so early given under other circumstances is very improbable. With so powerful an army, and such efficient means, delay must have afforded opportunity for rendering the success of the storm less problematical; but in Lord Wellington's situation, it became not only the boldest, but the wisest policy, to make a great effort before an equally numerous, and, within the reach of possibility, an overwhelming force, could be brought against him. He calculated the chances, went resolutely and directly to the point, and carried Badajos.

On the 5th of April, the 5th division bivouac'd in rear of the Sierra del Viento, in readiness to co-

operate in the assault. On the following evening, four divisions of the allied army were destined to mount the walls of Badajos, and triumphantly to accomplish a service, only to have been achieved by the best soldiers and the bravest men.

Ten at night was the hour ultimately fixed for a general attack of the place, that being considered the earliest period at which the respective arrangements, of necessity not commenced until after dark, could be completed. This delay, although unavoidable, was attended with increase of difficulty to the assailants, in entering by the breaches; for the moment the batteries ceased firing, which they did at half past seven, the enemy, during the two and a half hours intervening, worked assiduously, covering the front of the breaches with harrows and crows' feet, and crowning their summits with chevaux-de-frise of sword blades. Every means that French ingenuity could devise had been resorted to in accumulated profusion, to render entrance by the ruined bastions impossible: retrenchments had been formed as substitutes for the battered walls—combustibles of every description placed along the parapets to be hurled down with incessant and destructive precision—showers of shells—fire barrels, and hand grenades, added to the effects of an un-

ceasing musketry, gave to the ditch of the bastions of La Trinidad and Santa Maria the appearance of one uninterrupted fearful torrent of fire, unequalled in the annals of modern warfare. That existence could be preserved, or that any man should have issued untouched from the effects of one or other of the missiles thus directed for the extinction of life, seemed impossible. Passive, immovable, unshrinking, and determined, the brave officers and soldiers of the 4th and light divisions continued for a length of time, under these annihilating circumstances, occasionally in small numbers mounting the breach, until they grappled with the sword blades, in the act of endeavouring to remove which, the bravest men were either bayoneted, killed by the musketry fire, or rolled back into the ditch upon their less adventurous, but gallant comrades.—

> "Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando
> Explicet?"

During this most discouraging aspect of affairs, General Picton, with the 3d division, had also met with serious difficulty in obtaining possession of the castle. For upwards of an hour, gallantry, perseverance, activity, and determination, had been in vain exerted to force an entrance by escalade. The ladders were placed, and ascended, but death met the

successive officers or soldiers that reached the parapet. At length, by the personal exertions of General Picton, with the leading officers of his division, and the constant succession of fresh assailants that undauntedly ascended, an entrance was forced from the summit of one ladder, and a lodgement being at last effected, the troops rushed forward in support; resistance became less determined, and the 3d division remained in possession of the castle.

To form and march down on the rear of the force defending the breaches, was immediately determined upon; but it was discovered that the enemy had built up or barricaded the gates in so substantial a manner, as to prevent their being forced, without considerable delay, and the assistance of other implements for removing the obstructions than those in possession of the 3d division. General Picton consequently established the troops under his orders in the captured portion of the fortress, and awaited for daybreak.

An officer, conducting the party with scaling-ladders from the engineers' park to the bivouac of the 5th division, lost his way. General Leith, in consequence, had the mortification of being delayed until past eleven o'clock, before he could move to carry the escalade of the bastion of San Vicente into exe-

cution. During the interval he attracted the enemy's attention by a false attack on the Pardaleras outwork. The 8th Portuguese caçadores, employed on this service, kept up a galling and incessant fire from the very glacis of the work itself. At length, the ladders having been delivered to the division, the column moved towards the northwest angle of the place. General Leith, having received instructions to escalade the bastion of San Vicente with one brigade, and to support the attack with the other regiments of his division, ordered General Walker, with the 4th, 30th, and 44th, to mount the wall, the difficulty of which service may be estimated, when it is explained, that the face of the bastion had an escarpe thirty-one feet six inches in height, flanked by artillery,—that the palisades of the covered way were entire,—the counterscarp wall nearly twelve feet deep, and in the ditch, a cunette, five feet six inches in depth, by six feet six inches in breadth, had been excavated. The troops were discovered by the garrison when on the glacis, and a heavy fire opened upon them before they had forced the barrier gate; but nothing could check the progress of General Walker and the battalions under his orders, until they reached the lofty wall, at the summit of which the enemy, aware of

their intention, and fully prepared, were extended, deliberately and obstinately to resist men ascending singly, and on ladders upwards of thirty feet high. This does not appear the description of situation where defence could be difficult, or entrance practicable to ordinary men. At first, few of the ladders could be placed, some of them, after being reared, were thrown from the walls back into the ditch. Others, constructed of green wood, opened and separated, or were not of sufficient length, consequently the troops forced in by means of three or four only of the number originally appropriated to the service; but force in they did, and General Walker formed his brigade on the ramparts. He had been instructed to move forward, and by making a circuit of the interior of the works, to come in rear of the enemy's troops defending the breaches.

There are no means of destruction more alarming in the contemplation of mankind than mines, nor any warlike engine or preparation calculated to have the same appalling ideal effect on the minds of the soldiery. There is also in the darkness of night, and the treading hostile ground, supposed to have been prepared for every species of obstruction, something so uncertain, that it is neither to be wondered at, nor considered inconsistent with their

general bearing, that, under such circumstances, the bravest troops should be seized with irresolution from the most trivial causes. The flame of a port-fire struck a momentary terror into the minds of men, that artillery, musketry, walls, and the bayonets of French infantry, had failed to daunt. Part of General Walker's brigade, mistaking this appearance for the forerunner to the explosion of a mine, broke, and were bayoneted back to the spot where they had previously surmounted difficulties which there could have been no discredit in failing to overcome. Fortunately, General Leith had advanced part of the right brigade of his division in support of that already in the town. The second battalion of the 38th regiment, under Colonel Nugent, had ascended, and were formed on the ramparts. When the circumstance above detailed occurred, that corps, being prepared, received the pursuing enemy with a volley and bayonet charge that speedily terminated all contest. In the course of this short reverse, General Walker was dangerously wounded, and Lieutenant-Colonel Grey, of the 30th regiment, a very gallant officer, died in consequence of profuse bleeding, before assistance could be procured.

General Walker's brigade having again formed, the other regiments of the division ascended the

ladders, and the whole marched on the rear of the troops defending the breaches. General Leith narrowly escaped being precipitated into the ditch by the fall of a soldier shot dead on the upper part of the ladder he was mounting. Having succeeded in penetrating, and dispersing his opponents, he sent an officer to report to Lord Wellington that the 5th division was in the town. His bugles sounded the advance in all directions, distracting the enemy's attention, and inducing him to believe he was to be assailed from all quarters. Whether it proceeded from a knowledge that the castle was in possession of the allies, or an impression that farther resistance was vain, the efforts of the garrison relaxed, the 5th division drove every thing before it, and having opened the communication with the bastions of La Trinidad and Santa Maria, the 4th and light divisions, which had previously been withdrawn, again advanced, and marched into the town by the breaches. After considering the various events of this most important night, and comparing the periods at which it is authenticated that the different services were performed, it appears consistent with truth to arrive at the following conclusions:

In the first place, had Lord Wellington alone relied upon the ordinary mode of assault, that of

storming the breaches, the town would not have been taken. Had General Leith received the ladders, and escaladed soon after 10 o'clock as was intended, he would have been equally successful, and have saved the divisions contending for entrance at the breaches, upwards of an hour of continued and tremendous loss. Had he not escaladed at all, Badajos must have fallen in consequence of the castle being carried by the 3d division, but not until the following day, when the enemy might have given farther trouble. Had the attack by General Picton failed, still the success of the 5th division ensured the fall of the place. It was consequently the escalade of the bastion of San Vicente that occasioned the immediate reduction of the fortress.

Of the British troops employed in the assault, the light division had fifty-eight officers, and eight hundred and sixty-eight men; the 3d division, fifty officers, and four hundred and thirty-four men; the 4th, ninety-one officers, and eight hundred and forty-four men; and the 5th division, thirty-six officers, and five hundred and nine men, killed or wounded. Of the light division, Colonel M'Leod, commanding the 43d regiment, a young officer of great promise, was killed. Colonel Ridge, of the 5th regiment, was supposed to have fixed and

ascended the first ladder placed against the castle wall, where he was unfortunately killed. Lieutenant Lascelles of the engineers, fell in the ditch of the bastion of San Vicente, directing the 5th division to the point of attack.

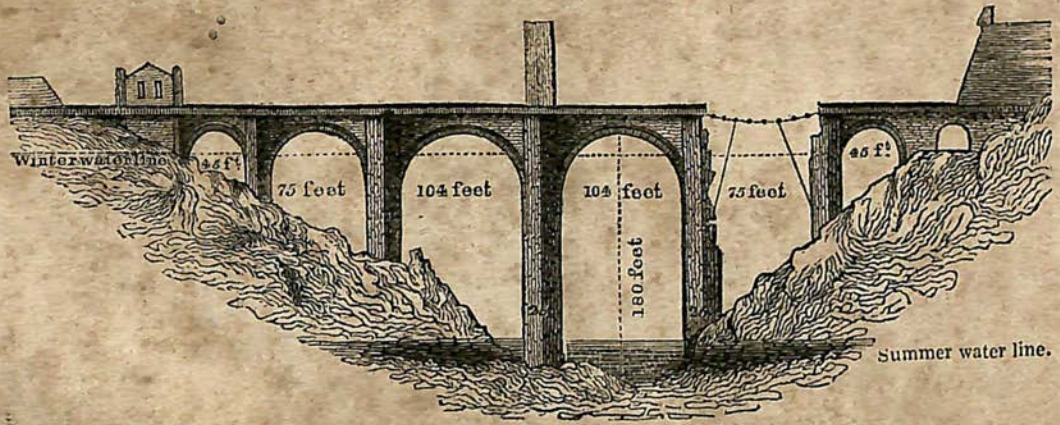
It was at Villafranca, on the 8th of April, that the Marshal Duke of Dalmatia received information of Badajos being in possession of the allies. The object of his march being thus frustrated, he put his army in retreat on the following day, and returned to Seville.

Lord Wellington, having directed the necessary repairs to the works of Badajos, and ordered Sir Richard Fletcher to see them completed, marched his army to the north, with the exception of Sir Rowland Hill's corps, left to manœuvre on the Guadiana, and to observe the motions of Comte d'Erlon, who continued in Estremadura with his division of the army of the South.

On arriving at Fuente Guinaldo, where, on the 25th of April, the allied head-quarters were established, Lord Wellington sent Colonel Sturgeon, of the staff corps, to Badajos and Elvas, for the purpose of superintending the construction of a very ingenious repair to the fracture occasioned by the explosion of an arch of the bridge at Alcantara. The

arch destroyed was of so extensive a span, and the parapet of the bridge so great a height from the bed of the river, that no repair by using timber was practicable; the gap to be passed over being ninety wide, and the height of the bridge, one hundred and eighty from the bed of the river. Colonel Sturgeon selected the pontoon house, in the arsenal at Elvas, as the place for forming the net of ropes destined to afford a secure passage for troops, artillery, and carriages of every description, across the chasm.

The work was commenced by placing two beams on supporters four feet high and ninety feet asunder. These were secured to the side and end walls of the building by braces and tackles, to prevent their approximating by the straining of the ropes. Eighteen cables were then stretched round them, extending from end to end; eight pieces of timber, six inches square, at equal distances, were placed upon the ropes, with notches, one foot asunder, cut on their surface to secure them; these notches were seared with hot irons to prevent the ropes from chafing. The cables were then lashed to the beams; they were netted together by rope yarn, and chains of sleepers were bolted and laid on the network, and secured to the two beams originally placed at the extremities of the work. Planks were cut and prepared for



ROMAN BRIDGE AT ALCANTARA, BUILT BY THE EMPEROR TRAJAN.

(View looking down the stream.)

being laid across, bored at the ends so as to receive a line destined to secure them to the sleepers and to each other.

This effective, but extremely portable bridge, was, on being completed, packed up for removal. The great net beams and transverse bearers were rolled up like a web of canvass, and placed on one of the pontoon carriages, which conveyed them to Alcantara. The next point was to prepare the edge of the fractured part of the bridge, and to cut channels in the masonry for the reception of the purchases.

When arrived on the spot, four strong ropes were stretched from side to side, as conductors, for passing the cable-bridge across, the beam on the south side having been previously sunk into the masonry; the whole was then stretched by windlasses erected on the opposite pier, by which means it was so tightly drawn as to prevent any great sinking, even when heavy weights were passed over, or the vibration which might render it insecure and dangerous.

This bridge, simple and ingenious in its construction, for the first time in Europe established the fact, that by cables drawn to their utmost tension, without any support whatever, the whole equipments of an army could be transported, without difficulty or danger, over a great river, and very extensive

chasm, while, on the approach of an enemy, the apparatus could be withdrawn, and transported to safety, without the slightest inconvenience. I cannot close the description of what has ever appeared to me a very eminent application of scientific knowledge, without noticing the person to whose varied intelligence and superior qualities more competent authorities have borne testimony. Colonel Sturgeon possessed extensive and scientific information, sound judgment, unwearied assiduity, and undaunted courage.

At the moment when Lord Wellington thus re-established his own communication across the Tagus at Alcantara, he determined to destroy that of the enemy at Almaraz, and thereby defeat direct combination, that might otherwise have rendered formidable the armies commanded by Marshals Soult and Marmont. Sir Rowland Hill received orders to execute this service, and having obtained heavy cannon and ammunition from Elvas, breaking up from Almendralejo, with part of his corps he marched, by Truxillo, to the banks of the Tagus.

Almaraz, centrically situated, and being also on the great route from Madrid to Badajos, was the most important point at which the French armies acting to the north and south of the Tagus, could

have established a safe and constant passage across that river: to deprive them of this, secured the impossibility of Marshal the Duke of Ragusa being reinforced from the army in Andalusia or Spanish Estremadura, without the enemy's troops being subjected to a great detour, and a consumption of time calculated to render such co-operation of trifling avail.

To render their temporary bridge, composed of pontoons, secure from the inroads either of guerillas or Spanish regular troops, the French constructed a tête-de-pont; and two formidable redoubts, armed with eighteen pieces of cannon, were completed on the immediate banks of the river. On the right bank, at a short distance from the tête-de-pont, was Fort Napoleon, calculated for a garrison of four hundred and fifty men; Fort Ragusa, on the opposite side of the river, near the road leading to Navalmoral, was capable of containing four hundred.

Sir Rowland Hill, with great promptitude and judgment, reduced these works, without sustaining a very severe loss. Having ascertained that the pass of Miravete, by which alone artillery could be transported, was not to be forced without considerable difficulty and delay, he resolved to leave his guns on the mountain, and adopting a path only practi-

cable for infantry, to carry the tête-de-pont and Fort Napoleon by escalade. This was immediately accomplished by General Howard's brigade. The 50th, under Colonel Stewart, one of the most distinguished regimental officers of the army, accompanied by a wing of the 71st regiment, placed ladders and carried the fort; they then rushed with the fugitive garrison, pêle-mêle, into the tête-de-pont, not giving the enemy a moment to rally, or organize any systematic defence. The French infantry crowded towards the bridge, hoping to receive shelter and protection from their companions in Fort Ragusa. Those who first succeeded in gaining the right bank, cut away the three boats nearest to that end of the bridge, by which means the survivors of the garrisons of Fort Napoleon, and the tête-de-pont, were prevented escaping: many had been drowned in the bustle and confusion, but two hundred and fifty officers and men were secured. The commandant of Fort Ragusa, panic-struck, abandoned the work, without an attempt at resistance, and marched his garrison in the direction of Navalmoral, for which dastardly conduct he was shot at Talavera de la Reyna.

Sir Rowland, having thus brilliantly carried into effect the instructions of Lord Wellington, destroyed

the works, burnt the pontoons with their carriages, and then returned to Merida.

I have not, in the course of this narrative, hitherto noticed with sufficient attention, a very influential and extraordinarily constituted force, namely, the Guerillas—partisans equally dreaded by the enemy, and hated by their own countrymen: a force combining many valuable qualities with great laxity of principle, frequently exhibiting undaunted courage and adventurous temerity, on other occasions shrinking from conflict, and only formidable to the unfortunate inhabitants subjected to their frequently unreasonable exactions.

The foundation of the Spanish Guerilla force is to be ascribed to the nearly universal spirit of hostility to the French aggression. That feeling, strongly implanted as it was in the minds of a turbulent, naturally warlike, noble, though misgoverned, people, induced a very general desire to participate in the struggle carrying on throughout the whole extent of the monarchy. This unsettled and hostile inclination became strengthened by the circumstances under which the civilians suffered, during the devastating system of subjection to the constant visits of different armies or bodies of troops, all burden-

some, and unfortunately at times presenting not a very distinct difference of conduct in the acknowledged enemy, the soldier of the country, or his more disciplined, but not more easily accommodated, friend and ally. It requires no additional testimony to establish the fact, that not only the armies, but the population of Spain were in active hostility to the French. The city, the agricultural village, the ruined convent, alike sent forth persons to swell the Guerilla force. At the commencement of the war in 1808 no such bands existed; nor was it until the provincial jurisdictions had shaken the basis of regular government, and subsequent to the dispersion of the Spanish armies, that these partisans made their appearance. The dispersed and lawless Spanish soldiery found their safety dependent on forming parties sufficiently numerous to resist the authority of the corregidors and alcaldés, and to enforce demands made in parts of the country where no power, either civil or military, existed sufficiently formidable to curb their exactions, or restrain the self-created importance they did not hesitate to assume.

This system, successfully adopted in a country whose government had become a chaos, was speedily enlarged upon. The marauders chose a chief:

and these men, no longer contemplating a return to their regiments, became the nucleus of many a guerilla party; their military knowledge and habits, their uniform and equipment, serving as a defective model to others hitherto uninitiated. These parties soon became numerous, but a spirit of enterprise and successful command only distinguished a few of the leaders; consequently, the generality of the bands gained little in numerical strength, or were destined to arrive at great notoriety; but the most insignificant were objects of terror to the French troops, inasmuch as their vicinity rendered the slightest removal from quarters a matter of captivity or death.

Of the most distinguished Guerilla leaders may be cited, the Minaó, the Empecinado, Don Julian Sanchez, the Medico, Porlier, the Cura, and Chaleco; these all commanded numerous and formidable bands, and were of essential service to the allied cause.

Nothing could be more motley than the usual array of the Guerilla bands. Provided a certain degree of individual military appearance prevailed, no effort at uniformity of dress or appointment was considered essentially necessary. The Guerilla generally became equipped with spoils from the soldiery of other countries, or a mixture of the most gaudy and tawdry dresses of his own. The flaring scarlet

and light-blue jacket of an Estremaduran hussar, the schakos of a French chasseur à cheval, pistols and saddle of English manufacture, the long straight sword of the enemy's dragoon, the brown Spanish sash, and leathern cartouch belt, with an Arragonese or Catalan escopeta, were the not unfrequent equipments of the same brigand, as the French invariably designated them.

The Empecinado, acting in the districts more immediately in the neighbourhood of Madrid, was more than any of the other partisan leaders in the public view. His band, conducted with great gallantry and enterprise, became the terror of the Court of Joseph Bonaparte. Reports were often circulated of Don Juan Martin, and his adventurous followers, being close to the walls of the capital, when in reality he was either scouring the Province of Guadalaxara, or levying contributions at Alcala de Henares. On one occasion he penetrated to the precincts of the Casa del Campo; at another, interrupted the rural festivities of the Pardo; and when more important service became necessary, he was found at the head of a formidable body of cavalry and infantry, ready to measure swords with the regular troops of the enemy. Perfectly acquainted with the country, surrounded by friends from whom he obtained the most accurate

information of the movements against him, personally brave, possessing the confidence of his party, zealous in the cause, and highly exasperated against the French, such a man could not fail to become powerful as an enemy, and by his successes, which were frequent and signal, encourage others to embark in similar modes of life.

Of the Asturian Guerilla leaders, the Marques de Porlier was the most celebrated. At an early period of the partisan warfare, he exasperated the enemy by the frequency of his attacks upon the convoys and detachments on their route from Bayonne to Madrid; invariably retiring into the mountains when numerously attacked, he baffled the utmost efforts of the French generals to rid themselves of the serious inconvenience and loss sustained from the effects of his active and indefatigable exertions. Upon one occasion, two divisions of infantry, with some hussars and Polish lancers, were detached for the purpose of annihilating his numerous and formidable band, but without success. Having obtained timely information of the movements against him, Porlier manœuvred to draw his enemy into the fastnesses of the Sierra de los Cameros, constantly retiring when outnumbered, occasioning considerable loss to his assailants, who, believing their own safety would be

compromised by further pursuit, left the Marquesito, as he was called, to reassemble his followers, and return to the line of communication, from whence he had been driven only to prove to his enemies the impossibility of destroying a force so constituted and commanded, when aided by the zealous assistance of the population of an almost inaccessible district.

In the Province of Leon, Don Julian Sanchez commanded an enterprising band, with which he frequently surprised the enemy's posts. Moving rapidly,—ever on the alert,—not subjecting himself to conflict on equal terms,—possessed of the most accurate information,—at the head of a numerous and well-mounted party, he established a renown, conveying to the French soldiery an exaggerated impression of his power, that proved highly beneficial to the cause. Don Julian evinced great zeal. He seemed to bestow his undivided attention on the discomfiture of the enemy, and was probably with less justice accused of mercenary exaction than any other Guerilla chief.

From the first establishment of the Spanish Guerilla force to the termination of the war, it daily rose in importance, becoming, as the struggle advanced, an increased object of annoyance and terror to the enemy. It had also obtained a firmer hold of public

opinion, and was extended over the whole surface of the monarchy.

The bands of various descriptions that started into notice, as a consequence of the successes obtained by the earlier adventurers, were innumerable; many of them, insignificant in number, possessing no leader either of character or talent, meriting in every respect the French appellation so liberally bestowed by that people on the whole class. Still they were useful, inasmuch as the very name of Guerilla sounded harshly in the enemy's camp, cramped the operations of his troops, occasioned a distrust and restraint seriously affecting the *morale* of the soldier, and preventing, in some degree, the undisturbed system of contribution by which alone the armies of Napoleon existed in Spain.

That little discipline or subordination existed in the minor Guerilla parties, may be deduced from the fate of Martinez—a man of stern, uncompromising temper, with a degree of resolute activity that had obtained for him considerable notoriety. Having entered into some trifling altercation with one of his *partido*, the exasperated brigand drew a pistol from his belt, and discharged it through the head of his chief!

The perfectly uncontrolled authority of the Gue-

rilla leaders gave them additional capabilities of annoyance. A partisan chieftain manœuvred his band more with reference to the enemy's communications, than with a view of engaging him on the plain. The country in which he carried on operations was usually selected, not by superior direction, but to suit his own convenience, and in accordance with what appeared best calculated to support his predatory system, and afford scope for those minor successes against isolated detachments of the French army, by whose destruction he derived a claim to levy contributions on his defenceless countrymen.

It was no security to a French general that these petty chiefs were understood to be at a distance from his quarters; on the contrary, it tended to give a misplaced confidence, and to encourage the wandering propensities of the soldiery, who were frequently cut off by Guerillas supposed to be in another province. Whenever a chief had traversed a district, and levied contributions on the several towns within its boundaries, he marched to a different field of action, leaving its inhabitants to the *merciful protection* of some other bandit as rapacious as himself.

In the dusk of evening, I have frequently seen the horsemen of a Guerilla band entering a village to take up their quarters for the night; the stillness

of all around, with the perfectly quiet and unostentatious arrival of the partido, being strongly contrasted with the scene immediately resulting from it. First, there probably occurred great difficulty and dissatisfaction as to quarters, proper respect not being paid to the defenders of their country, arising very naturally from the people not considering those visitors of superior importance to their own families, or being inclined to resign every comfort to satisfy their unreasonable expectations. Next came the assembly of the magistracy, to whom demands, requests, or threats, were applied, as circumstances rendered necessary, with a view to extract supplies of money, clothing, provisions, or arms. Where were the unfortunate peasants to find means of resistance? or to whom were their well-founded complaints to be addressed?—nowhere with the least probable chance of commiseration. "It was unfortunate," they were told, "hard upon the inhabitants, and to be deplored; but the nature of the war, and circumstances of the country, rendered these inflictions unavoidable; they must consequently be patiently and uncomplainingly borne."

With all this oppressive latitude, neither very temperately nor judiciously exercised by the description of people in whose hands rested the power,

the Guerillas, as I have previously stated, were eminently useful in harassing and weakening the enemy, and had an undoubted influence on the favourable termination of the war.

The above picture, added to every circumstance of this noble and most interesting struggle, may convey some idea of the depth of feeling which animated the Spanish people—a feeling that years of misery, constant annoyance, loss of property, and endless exaction, left unshaken and unabated.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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LIST OF PLATES.

VOLUME FIRST.

Madrid to face page - - - - - 46
Distant Castello Branca, - - - - - 139
Merida, - - - - - - - - 180
Castle of Almiroh, - - - - - - 193
Abrantes, - - - - - - - - 194
Castle of Zagala, - - - - - - 197
Alburquerque, - - - - - - - 205
Guarda, - - - - - - - - 227
Pena Cova, - - - - - - - 228
Punhete, - - - - - - - 275
Bridge of Alcantara, - - - - - 300

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